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Academic Resilience in Newcomers

A Dissertation

Presented to

the Faculty of the Morgridge College of Education

University of Denver

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

by

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ABSTRACT

The United States continues to transform demographically, economically, culturally, and linguistically, as it has for several generations. At the forefront of this change are the educators, struggling to make sense of how to teach students who are culturally and linguistically diverse.

The main research question guiding this study was: What factors support or constrain the academic resiliency of Newcomers? The purpose of this study was to examine the academic resilience of Newcomers at an urban high school in Colorado. This qualitative study utilized case study methods of data collection. This study took place in four stages. The first stage encompassed the participant selection. The second stage consisted of interviewing the case study participants. The third stage entailed collecting and conducting analysis of documents. The last stage focused on data analysis. The findings of this study suggested the supporting factor for academic success was a supportive network that provided practical and emotional support to Newcomers in their community, school, and family. In addition, Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP) demonstrated that a caring and supporting environment was desired along with valuing the Newcomers culture within the school. Furthermore, a sense of belonging within their family and community. The study also examined the internal and external motivation that influenced academic resilience. In contrast, the findings of this study indicated that constrain for academic resilience was discordance with school policy in discipline, grades, technology, and high-stakes assessment. In addition, bullying had an impact on

the participants' academic resilience. Furthermore, permanent or temporary family separation had an emotional toll on academic resilience. Acculturation constrained the academic resilience of the participants. The findings of this study led to the following suggestions in order to support the academic resilience in Newcomer students: First, provide emotional support for the Newcomers that have experienced traumatic events. Second, family and schools need to motivate Newcomers by supporting them in their academic endeavor. Third, districts need to adjust the period by which they assess Newcomers. Fourth, schools need to improve the relationship between Newcomers' families and the school by explaining school policies in the families' native language.

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“For with God nothing will be impossible.” Luke 1:37

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CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to examine the academic resilience of Newcomers at an urban high school in Colorado. Academic resilience is defined by Martin & Marsh (2009) as “the heightened likelihood of success in school and other life accomplishments despite environmental adversities brought about by early traits, condition and experiences (Wang, Haertal, & Walberg, 1994, p. 46).” Newcomers are students with low-level English/or native language skills who often have limited formal schooling or interrupted education in their native countries (Boyson & Short, 2000). This study will explore how newly arrived immigrants progress through the United States school system by examining factors that contribute to, or inhibit, their academic success. “Immigrant” is a common term used for youth born outside of the country and for first-generation youth born to immigrant families (Bal & Perzigian, 2013). The term “refugee” refers to an individual outside their country of origin who fears persecution related to race, religion, nationality, social group membership, or political orientation (United Nation High Commissioner for refugees, 2002). For the purpose of this study, the term Newcomer will be used to encompass the terms for immigrant and refugee.

It is essential to examine factors that support or constrain the academic success of Newcomers so that educators can gain insight into the experiences of these students and

foster their success. The main research question guiding this study is: What factors support or constrain the academic resilience of Newcomers? The sub questions are: How does the family context support or constrain the academic success of Newcomers? How does the school context support or constrain the academic success of Newcomers? How does the community context support or constrain the academic success of Newcomers? How does the societal context support or constrain the academic success of Newcomers?

Rationale for study

There has been a lack of research that analyzes the factors that affect the learning of Newcomer students (Bang, 2011; Carlson, Cacciatore, & Klimek, 2012; Hagelskamp, Suarez- Orozco, & Huges, 2010; Martin & Marsh, 2009; Roxas & Roy, 2012; Stermac, Elgie, Dunlap, & Kelly, 2010). There is a need for research to examine the academic achievements of Newcomers by demonstrating the academic progress they make over time and how they overcome challenges (Stermac et al., 2010). Examining their stories provides information about Newcomers and what is needed for their success in urban schools. Ladson-Billings (1998) states, “Stories provide the necessary context for understanding, feeling, and interpreting” (p. 13). It is important for educators to understand how Newcomers’ past and present experiences affect their educational success.

Educational Problem and Significance

The United States is currently experiencing population growth with immigrants and refugees. Given the current growth patterns with immigration, there is also an increase of immigrants and refugees in U.S. public schools. Research shows that a

majority of these Newcomers have difficulty academically (Bal & Perzigian, 2013; Hersi & Watkinson, 2012; Short, 2002; Suarez-Orozco, Bang, & Ongag, 2010). Nevertheless, there are Newcomers who maintain their resilience regardless of the adversities they face.

Growth. Migration Policy Institute (2018) figures show that in 2000, there were 31 million foreign-born people residing in the United States. In 2016, there were 43 million. That is approximately 13.5% of the total population. In the state of Colorado, there were 369,903 foreign-born in 2000, compared with 544,733 in 2016, which is approximately 9.8% of Colorado's population (Nwosu, Batalova, & Auclair, 2018).

The U.S. Department of Education (2017) documented 840,000 immigrant students and more than 4.6 million English Language Learners enrolled in the 2016 academic school year. Educators have struggled to help students who are culturally and linguistically diverse to succeed academically (Borjian & Padilla, 2009). In the Rocky Mountain School district (pseudonym), the site of this study, there were 34,413 English Language Learners out of 90,150 total students, which translates to 38% of the district's population being linguistically diverse in 2016.

As the Newcomer population increases in schools, so does the participation in English Language Learner (ELL) programs. Two programs that aid ELLs with their English acquisition are the Newcomer Center and English Language Acquisition (ELA). A Newcomer Center addresses the literacy needs of English Language Learners, creates a welcoming environment for students with limited schooling experiences, closes the academic gap, and promotes educational success (Boyson & Short, 2000). The Center also serves as a social function by helping Newcomers adjust to the American education

system and social environment, and allowing them to feel emotionally safe (Friedlander, 1991). Lewis and Gray (2016) documented that there were 16% of districts in the United States that had high school Newcomer programs in the 2015-16 academic school year. The ELA program is structured English immersion that emphasizes developing the students' literacy solely in English (Zelasko & Antunez, 2000). The goal is for students to become proficient in English while learning content in an all-English setting (Zelasko & Antunez, 2000). The U.S Department of Education (2017) documented 4.6 million English Learners.

Education. The research revealed that a majority of these Newcomers have difficulty academically (Bal & Perzigian, 2013; Hersi & Watkinson, 2012; Short, 2002; Suarez-Orozco et al., 2010). Newcomers have a graduation rate of 61%, compared with 81.6% of non-Newcomer students (Sugarman, 2015). The low graduation rate is a consequence of numerous factors: English competence, formal education, age of enrollment, and their own personal goals (Borjian & Padilla, 2010; Echevarria, Short, & Powers, 2006; McHugh, Herzog-Punzenberger, Sugarman, Dewitz, & Wong, 2015). Newcomers may arrive with little or no English language proficiency (Short, 2002). They may also have limited literacy in English/ native language and are three or more years below the age-appropriate grade level subjects (Ruiz-de-Velasco & Fix, 2000). Newcomers come to the United States with varying levels of formal education, and often they are academically unprepared to start at the age-appropriate grade level due to low levels of English language proficiency and academic content (Stermac et al., 2010). When students have low levels of content knowledge, they tend to lag behind and age out

of school (Ruiz-de-Velasco & Fix, 2000). Many Newcomers do not matriculate into college after high school because of their dropout rates (Suarez-Orozco, Gaytan, Bang, Pakes, O'Conner, & Rhodes, 2010), and first-generation immigrant children have higher dropout rates than native-born children (Ruiz-de-Velasco & Fix, 2000). Despite their challenges, Newcomers are entitled to equal access to education, regardless of their demographic background (Educational Services, 2014; Shriberg, 2007).

Newcomers can excel academically if they are willing to accept the host culture as their own, learn the English language, have cross-cultural connections, maintain independence of thought, and express their ideas (Merali, 2005). Newcomers' success is reliant on their intrinsic motivation, the commitment of their teachers, the participation of their parents, and the acceptance and respect of their host society (Borjian & Padilla, 2010). Newcomers who are academically successful despite traumatic events in their lives are academically resilient.

Overview of study design and methodology

This study explores the research question guiding it: What factors support or constrain the academic resilience of Newcomers? The sub questions include: How does the family context support or constrain academic success? How does the school context support or constrain academic success? How does the community context support or constrain academic success? How does the societal context support or constrain academic success?

This theoretical framework for the study builds on the Ecological Theory of Human Development by Urie Bronfenbrenner. The theory explores the interrelationship

of humans and the environments in which they interact (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). The theory considers the development of a person as a process of interactions between the person and levels of environment. This theory demonstrates how the Newcomer interacts with the environment and the effects it has on the Newcomer. These environmental influences affect the academic performance of Newcomers.

This qualitative study takes place in four stages. The first stage encompasses the participant selection. The second stage consists of interviewing the case study participants. The third stage entails collecting and conducting analysis of documents. The last stage focuses on data analysis.

Positionality Statement

The researcher has experience teaching science to Newcomers, English Language Learners, and mainstream English language learners. Certain feelings and beliefs have developed based on this experience. To clarify any bias, the researcher engaged in reflexivity and developed a Positionality Statement.

For the past 16 years, the researcher has taught diverse students of various ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds, and abilities. The investigator lacked an understanding of what it is to be a Newcomer and what factors assisted them to academic success. The researcher wanted to understand how Newcomers experienced environmental adversities and how they became academic resilient.

The topic addressed by this research study, academic resilience, is of interest for two reasons. First, there is interest in the adverse environments that the Newcomers experience. As an educator, the researcher has attempted to fully understand the

experiences of the students. The interest in the researcher intensified during a professional development, when Newcomer parents came to share their experience of fleeing their native country to the nearby refugee camps, the deprivation of basic needs, and the education that their children experience. They informed the staff of their culture, traditions, and customs to adjust the teaching. While that particular professional development has not been repeated, nevertheless, it is a professional develop that is in great need based on conversations the researcher heard the teaching staff having years later. Conversations such as “I don’t know how to help those students” or “All they do is cheat” or “Everything has been handed to them; what more do they need?” or “Why don’t they just come in and get help?” Currently, there is no method to effectively disseminate information pertaining to Newcomers’ adverse experiences to educators who teach them, to give the educators a better understanding of what they have gone through.

Second, there is an interest in relation to the support and constraining factors in academic resilience. As a teacher lead, the researcher trains new educators to the district. The training only consists of science curriculum. If the educators want to discover more about Newcomers, they need to take additional training in English Language Acquisition. However, the training informs the educator about the language acquisition, not how to support the Newcomer emotionally. Currently, there are not systems in place to educate pre-service teachers on what factors contribute and inhibit academic resilience. Having access to this information would assist school districts in developing policies and practices to encourage educators to support Newcomers.

Summary

This chapter provides a purpose, rational, educational problem and significance, and an overview of the study and design. The purpose of the study is to examine the academic resilience of Newcomers. The rational for the study is the lack of research. The educational problem and significance is an increase in immigrants into the classrooms and that schools are not prepared for this increase. The study is qualitative with four case-study participants.

Chapter two provides a literature review and theoretical framework relevant to this study. Chapter three describes the research site and the research procedure, data collection, and analysis strategies employed in this study. Chapter four identifies the factors that contributed to their academic success, as well as the barriers Newcomers have to overcome in order to be academically successful. Chapter five examines the implications of the research findings.

CHAPTER TWO LITERATURE REVIEW

Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Theory of Human guides this study. It encompasses literature on protective factors and risk factors that include society, community, teacher/students, family, and individuals. The protective factors contribute to the academic success of Newcomers (Morales, 2010), whereas the risk factors have the possibility to create barriers or hinder academic success of the Newcomers (Morales, 2010).

Figure 2

Ecological Theory

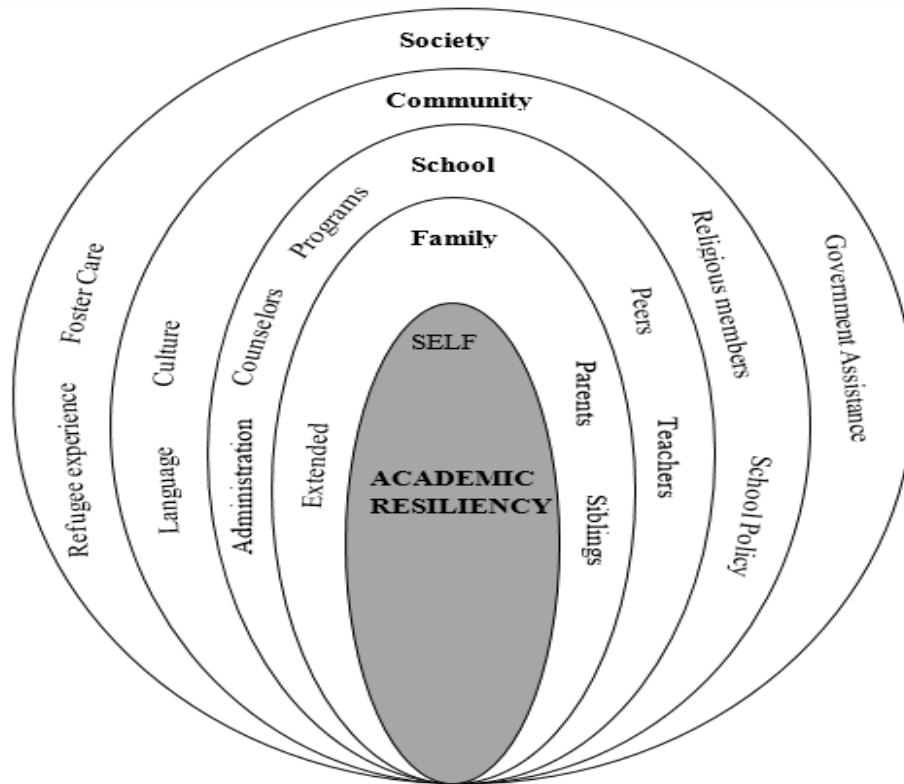


Figure 2. Ecological Theory. Adapted from “Working with immigrant children and their families: an application of Bronfenbrenner’s ecological systems theory,” Diagram by Paat, Yok-Fong. (2013). Journal of human behavior in the social environment. 23, 954. Copyright 2013 by Taylor & Francis Group.

Ecological theory provides a tool to understand the environmental complexities that Newcomers face. Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Theory conceptualizes a person’s environment as a multi-layered set of interconnected environmental systems that influence the development of the person (McGuckin & Minton, 2014). Bronfenbrenner (1977) defines the ecology of human development as “...the scientific study of the progressive, mutual accommodation, throughout the life span, between a growing human organism and the changing immediate environments in which it lives” (p. 514). This theory can apply to the examination of the academic resilience of Newcomers because it is inclusive of the environmental influences of Newcomers’ academic progress.

Academic resilience is defined by Martin & Marsh (2009) as “the heightened likelihood of success in school and other life accomplishments despite environmental adversities brought about by early traits, condition and experiences (Wang, Haertal, & Walberg, 1994, p. 46).” When Newcomers are exposed to environmental adversities and have protective factors, they are safeguarded from damaging effects (Carlson et al., 2012).

There are four systems in the Ecological Theory of Human Development that impact the academic success of students (McMahn, Keys, Berardi, & Crouch, 2011; Suarez-Orozco et al., 2010). Bronfenbrenner (1977) places the individual at the center with distal developmental stimulus around her/him; these are: chronosystem, microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, and macrosystem (Renn, 2003). The chronosystem involves the environmental events and transitions that occur within the

individual's life. The chronosystem is not part of this research because there are many events (such as politics, wars, changes to refugee policy, etc.) to elaborate on with each of the four diverse participants who are from different nations. However, the other systems are essential to this study. The section that follows describes the four systems, starting with the macrosystem to the microsystem, along with the contributing factors and barriers that affect the Newcomers' academic progress.

Macrosystem

Bronfenbrenner (1977) defines macrosystem as the societal culture that the individual lives in. This system is comprised of large societal institutions such as government, foster care, etc. that lay the social and historical context for development (Bronfenbrenner, 1993). Members of ethnic minority groups experience both the macrosystem of the host culture and their own culture. Culture is common philosophies and values, rules, customs, and beliefs that penetrate a person (Leonard, 2011). When the host society accepts and welcomes the Newcomer, the transition can be smooth; however, if a host society is conflicted about Newcomers, the transition can be difficult.

Contributing factors for academic resilience. Societies that welcome Newcomers accept and assist them in their transition to the U.S. and contribute to the academic resilience of refugees. In any circumstance, people should feel welcomed by the place that will be their home. Some Newcomers and their families have fled their places of origin for various reasons: warfare, political conflict, natural disaster, population displacement, poverty, or fear of being persecuted (Carlson et al., 2012; United Nation High Commissioner for Refugees, 2002). Newcomers have to start in a

new place, and in a new country, community, and home. When communities welcome Newcomers, they are more likely to succeed in school (Borjian & Padilla, 2010; Merali, 2005). In the U.S., states that have high refugee resettlement have programs to help refugees transition into the community, including affordable housing, medical care, education, transportation, and cultural information, to ease the transition into their new community. Currently, successful dual language programs use the native language of the Newcomer and gradually the students learn English over several years (Guerrero, 2004; Ovando, 2003; Reyes, 2008).

Barriers to academic resilience. At times, society can inhibit academic resilience by having different laws across states regarding English acquisition. Although Newcomers are the fastest growing student population in the United States, some states have passed legislation to eliminate bilingual classes, shorten the time in which a Newcomer must learn English, and eliminate the Newcomer classes with English-only instruction (Guerrero, 2004; Ovando, 2003). California Proposition 227 states Limited English Proficiency (LEP) students will exit sheltered English classes to regular all English classes within a year. Arizona Proposition 203 Section 15-752 states that English learners will learn in a sheltered English immersion program for one year, then will enroll in mainstream English classes.

The purported purpose of the bills was to educate limited English Language Learners in one year. In the U.S., state legislatures propose and pass or veto laws depending on how society views or values Newcomers (Borjian & Padilla, 2009). Depending on the culture of the society and the attitudes toward Newcomer students,

laws could reflect on the cultural and language strengths that the Newcomer students bring to U.S. schools (Bal & Perzigian, 2013). These societal laws, policies, and views can infiltrate school practices in different states by sending negative messages about immigrants' languages, rendering their languages invalid and inhibiting academic resilience.

Exosystem

Bronfenbrenner (1977) defines exosystem as social settings that the individual does not actively participant in. Components of the exosystem for Newcomers can include school policies, laws, and regulations. For example, policies such as No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and Race To The Top require the school district to align curriculum to state assessments measures, which may or may not meet the need of Newcomers and inhibit their academic resilience.

Contributing factors to academic resilience. Schools are influenced by the mandated policies of NCLB and Race To The Top. In 2001, NCLB created a reform to establish high expectations for all students by establishing accountability for public schools to determine student achievement (Good, Masewicz, & Vogel, 2010). Curriculum, best practices, professional development, class size, and funding influence the school evaluation (Good et al., 2010) by supporting or inhibiting the outcome of the high states assessment. One of the stated goals of NCLB was to close the achievement gap by testing students and reporting the results (Shriber, 2007). The intent of NCLB was to produce educational opportunities for the poorest performing schools that would match those in high performing schools by requiring states to adopt challenging academic

content standards in the core classes. In order to teach the challenging academic content standards, NCLB required highly qualified teachers in every classroom with high expectations. Additionally, highly qualified teachers could be replaced if they did not meet the passing rate. Moreover, restructured or closed schools could lose their student body because they did not meet the passing rate (Tanner, 2013). Last, students and their families could choose to enroll in a higher performing school, if it had the space.

Barriers to academic resilience. School policies that are in discord with the student's native (country of origin) school make it difficult for students to learn (Hersi & Watkins 2012). School culture and norms from other countries are significantly different (Suarez-Orozco et al., 2010). When students do not understand the policies, they often segregated themselves from the host culture (Orfield & Lee, 2006). School culture inhibits academic success, as does high stakes assessments.

NCLB mandated grade level proficiency for 100% of all students by 2014 (Christenson, 2003). NCLB also implemented high school exit exams, which increased the dropout rates for ELLs (Christenson, 2003) because of the language and teaching practices that exclude students' culture and linguistic contributions that they bring to the class (Nicholas & Valenzuela, 2013). Unfortunately, this mandate has been a challenge for ELLs because their performance on the state assessment has been well below that of their native English counterparts (Good et al., 2010; Nicholas & Valenzuela, 2013; Shriberg, 2007). The state assessment has had little positive impact on student achievement for students of low socioeconomic backgrounds, diverse populations, and second language learners (Nichols and Valenzuela, 2013).

Race To The Top was introduced after NCLB. This initiative is a grant program that rewards schools that demonstrate high student outcomes, making educational gains in student achievement, closing the achievement gap, increasing graduation rates, and ensuring students are college and career ready (U.S Department of Education).

However, this initiative further instantiated high stakes testing and promoted charter schools (Tanner, 2013). Race To The Top reinforced initiatives to implement basic skill drill curriculum, limit elective classes, and create a stringent teacher and school evaluation system (Tanner 2013). High stakes testing have disregarded Newcomers because the assessment is not in their native language, which produces higher levels of failure as compared with their native English-speaking peers (Nichols & Valenzuela, 2013). Consequently, testing and instructional practices are biased because they dismiss Newcomers' language, culture, and community-based identities (Nichols & Valenzuela, 2013). At the same time, Newcomers are under pressure to perform at the same level as their counterparts.

Mesosystem

The mesosystem consists of interactions occurring between two or more microsystem components. Bronfenbrenner (1977) defines mesosystem as the interactions between various microsystems of the individual as well as a network of interpersonal relationships that overlap across the various environments. The interaction between the microsystem and mesosystem can conflict or come together in their developmental influences. The Newcomer may react independently to each microsystem (e.g., academic and family). They might also accept or reject the value or message conveyed from each

microsystem about identity, challenges, possessions, or assistance (Renn, 2003). One microsystem can change another; for example, how the school interacts with the Newcomers' parents can affect the student.

Contributing factors for academic resilience. When students encounter positive relationships with adults and peers, they are motivated to excel in school. Moreover, schools provide a sense of belonging for the Newcomers.

Supportive relationships. Supportive relationships result in the Newcomer having positive proximal connections across the ecological systems (Smokowski, Evans, Cotter, & Shenyang, 2014). Relationships with parents, teachers, and neighbors play a crucial role in the Newcomers' well-being. In addition, relationships with peers have a direct effect on Newcomers' academic performance (Moon & Ando, 2009). Newcomers with high succeeding friends have better grades than do those with peers less involved in school (Moon & Ando, 2009). Newcomers who experience positive relationships exhibit intrinsic motivation, have a sense of identity, and maintain self-control (Wasonga, Christman, & Kilmer 2003). Newcomers who have a higher degree of supportive peer networks focus on positive factors related to school achievement and academic resilience.

Schools. Schools that provide the Newcomer with a sense of belonging have a positive school culture and strong leadership. Schools are usually the first social and institutional spaces in which the Newcomers engage in cultural adaptation. Newcomers spend most of their time in school, and it is important that the students have a sense of belonging. When Newcomers feel a connection with the school, they experience lower levels of distress (Smokowski et al., 2014). Research indicates when Newcomers

experience a higher level of school belonging, they have meaningful improvements to their grades over time, taking into account school pressure and emotional factors (McMahan et al., 2011). Overall, student achievement in an urban environment depends on a positive school culture, safety, and cultural awareness (Delpit, 1995; Leonard, 2011). Last, the academic success of Newcomers increases when there is strong leadership and administrative support that engages families (Christenson, 2003).

Barriers to academic resilience. When students encounter negative relationships with adults and peers, it is challenging to excel in school. Moreover, schools can inhibit academic success with the policies that they enforce.

Relationships. Relationships that influence the students negatively will affect their academic resilience. Negative relationships can damage the Newcomer's social interaction (Smokowski et al., 2014). As students spend more time at school, they extend the time they spend with their peers, which eventually influences the Newcomers (Smokowski et al., 2014). When the influence is negative, such as peer rejection, language problems, or delinquent behavior (Titzmann, Raabe, & Silbereisen, 2008), Newcomers may follow suit. Unsupportive teacher and peer relationships can serve as stressful interactions that can affect the student's development (Brown, 2007; Smokowski et al., 2014).

Schools. Schools can inhibit academic resilience with the school policies that they enforce, as well as the hostile school environment that they experience. Schools can be risk factors for Newcomers because they often enforce policies directed at eliminating any linguistic, historical, and cultural material that reaffirm the culture of the student

(Good et al., 2010). Newcomers overwhelmingly attend underfunded urban schools that cannot provide them with acceptable academic and behavioral programs because they have high staff turnover rates, inadequate support for native language, unchallenging curriculum, and minimal family involvement (Bal & Perizigian, 2013; Suarez-Orozco et al., 2010). Schools also typically segregate English Language Learners from the mainstream population by locating their classes in a separate wing or floor of the school (Nieto, 2000), which leads to fewer opportunities for Newcomer to interact with native English speakers. Moreover, counselors often place Newcomers and English Language Learners into lower vocational tracks instead of the high expectation academic tracks (Gay, 2000).

Microsystem

Bronfenbrenner (1977) defines microsystem as the context in which the individual lives in. The microsystem consists of environments that individuals have a direct experience (Arnold, Lu, & Armstrong, 2012).

Contributing factors to academic resilience. Teachers and family are part of the Newcomers' microsystem. Within this context, there are contributing factors that account for the academic resilience of the Newcomer student.

Teachers. In order to empower Newcomers, teachers need to implement best practices through culturally responsive teaching (Nieto, 2000). Ladson-Billings (1995) identified culturally responsive education as interactions between teachers and linguistically diverse students, wherein home, community, and school culture work collaboratively. In order for teachers to be culturally relevant, they must demonstrate the

ability to develop a student academically, cultivate and maintain cultural competence, and be socio-politically critical. To accomplish this, culturally relevant educators must incorporate students' backgrounds, knowledge, and experiences to link school and home lives into the curriculum (Gay, 2000). A culturally responsive teacher must possess certain skills, beliefs, and knowledge to achieve successful results with students who are diverse (Borjan & Padilla, 2009). This includes: helping students accept and affirm their cultural identities, using cultural references to impart knowledge, setting high expectations, defining and practicing rules and procedures, and teaching in different modalities.

Teachers can help students accept and affirm their cultural identities by presenting lessons that positively promote a variety of cultures (Borjian & Padilla, 2009). For educators to support their students' cultures successfully, they must identify how they themselves view culture, select appropriate instructional approaches that frame curriculum content, and create a social /context for learning based on their own ethnic identity development (Diamond & Moore, 1995; Gay, 2000; Hollins, 1999; Pranksy & Bailey, 2003). Educators make a more significant impact when they appreciate and respect the backgrounds and traditions of their students. Students of color and varying ethnic backgrounds learn best when the curriculum reflects their cultural perspectives and experiences (Delpit, 1995).

Teachers who truly care for their students have an obligation to hold them to high expectations and utilize proven strategies that will elevate those students to greater levels of achievement (Gay, 2000). In order to demonstrate effective instruction, teachers need

to build a bridge between prior knowledge that culturally diverse students bring to the classroom, and their current understanding of new information (Ooka & Sablan, 1998). To facilitate the establishment of high expectations, a teacher must explicitly define and practice rules and procedures. The teaching of classroom rules and procedures ensures success and expectations of success (Bondy, Ross, Gallingane, & Hambacher, 2007). Continuously repeating requests and calmly delivering consequences to ensure appropriate behavior will hold students accountable for meeting desired outcomes (Gay, 2000).

Culturally relevant teaching incorporates the students' cultures in order to preserve and exceed the negative effects of the prevailing culture (Ladson- Billings, 1994). Teachers of culturally diverse students must be familiar with their interactional patterns, familiar strategies, environment, content, instructional alternative approaches, and methods of assessment. For example, interdependent students learn from direct instruction and observation, whereas an independent learner tends to acquire knowledge verbally (Nieto, 2000). Of the three teaching modalities (visual, auditory, and kinesthetic), most culturally diverse students learn through the visual and kinesthetic methods (Ooka & Sablan, 1998).

When Newcomer students experience culturally responsive teaching strategies, they are able to achieve in school (Bal & Perzigian, 2013; Diamond & Moore, 1995; Ladson-Billings & Brown, 2008; Reyes, 2008). With all the psychological challenges with which Newcomers have to deal, they may come into the classroom with many uncertainties.

Family. Research shows that families have an enormous influence on Newcomers' school achievement (Kapikiran, 2012; Moon & Ando, 2009). Culture influences learning and child development through the family's practice and interactions because of the ecological system in which they live (Faulstich-Orellana, 2003). Newcomers who have abundant support from their families make better decisions, have positive life goals and greater educational goals, and perform better in academics (Moon & Ando, 2009). When Newcomers use native language in their home after they have learned English, they significantly outperform peers who replace their native language with English (Guerrero, 2004; Nieto, 2000; Ovando, 2003; Reyes, 2008). Moreover, Newcomers allowed to draw on their home language and culture in school excel academically (Reyes, 2008).

Connections between home and school promote student achievement (Noddings, 2005). Becoming familiar with the students and their home lives can give the teacher insight on how to support students in ways that can make them more successful (Bondy et al., 2007). Parent involvement in diverse communities can vary from the more traditional approaches. Parents can support their children academically by communicating with educators, volunteering, enriching home life, advocating for education in general or a school in particular, and collaborating with the community. Different cultural values and goals may lead to different outcomes for families. Factors that influence parent participation include role expectations, sense of efficacy, invitations from school, conflicting expectations of students, and assumptions. To engage parents successfully, the school community must identify appropriate ways for families to help,

acknowledge the influence of parents' experiences with schooling, and articulate the importance of obtaining and maintaining key family information (Trumbull, Rothstein-Fishch, Greenfield, & Quiroz, 2001). Many factors affect parental involvement, such as country of origin, time of residence in the U.S., the community in which they reside, amount of contact with home country, and social class position (Faulstich, 2003).

Barriers to academic resilience. School personnel and families are part of the Newcomers' microsystem. Within this context, there are barriers that account for the academic progress of the Newcomer student.

School personnel. The adults in the school building can create socially hostile environments for Newcomers, wherein the family cultural practices (e.g., native language, food, learning techniques, and dress) are often disregarded by the host country (Bal & Perzigian, 2013). Educational pedagogy used by teachers reflects the cultural ideas of the host society; therefore, Newcomers may feel pressured to abandon their culture to survive and prosper in the school environment (Good et al., 2010; Merali, 2005). Newcomers may experience bullying by their host peers (Titzmann et al., 2008). Instead of correcting the behavior of host students, the Newcomers may attempt to assimilate or blend in to avoid name-calling and racist remarks (Titzmann et al., 2008). The culture of the school is often different from that to which Newcomers are accustomed (e.g. dress code, how students address the teacher, group work, individual work, cultural miscues, personal space, eye contact, tone, learning style, student-centered, active learning, and cooperative learning).

Teachers. Teachers are usually unprepared to teach diverse population students, they make assumptions on their students, and they lack a connection with the family (Ladson-Billings, 1995). The interaction between the educator and student can also have an impact on academic resilience. Teachers make the most impact on a Newcomer in the school system. However, teacher education programs often do not educate their novice teachers in instructional strategies for English Language Learners, social justice or equity, and valuing the culture and language of their students (Borjian & Padilla, 2009; Powell, 1997). Educators are not often properly equipped to comprehend and address the diverse strengths, needs, and concerns of the Newcomers adequately (Bal & Perzigian, 2013; Kozol, 2005). Teachers tend to make assumptions about what Newcomers need based on limited knowledge and experience (Roxas & Roy, 2012). Educators often do not have the knowledge, skills, or dispositions to teach ethnically diverse students (Gay, 2000). In addition, teachers may not take into account the race, refugee status, and previous experiences with schooling, language, and socioeconomic status of their Newcomer students (Ruiz & Fix, 2000). Some Newcomers have been subjected to numerous traumatic experiences, including murder, rape, poverty, and torment before resettling to their host country (Carlson et al., 2012). Teachers are often unprepared and lack training to support students who have these challenges (Smokowski, et al., 2014). When a Newcomer identifies unfair treatment from educators, the Newcomer mistrusts the teacher, and this leads to inadequate school performance (Moon & Ando, 2009). The quality of the connection between school personnel (teachers, principals, secretaries) and the family also impacts the academic resilience of the Newcomer (Trumbul et al., 2001).

Families. Families can affect Newcomers' academic resilience. For example, families may physically separate from each other, have different values than the host country, need students to work for the family to survive economically, and/or have strong familial attachments. Family separation due to migration can have positive and negative psychological effects on the children and their parents (Gindling & Poggio, 2012). The broken bonds between parent and child can have an emotional toll and developmental consequences (Gindling & Poggio, 2012).

The parents push their children to support the family monetary needs, complete household chores, and be a language broker for parents who only speak their native language; this can be a strong support for the family, however, it can also be a burden to the student (Roche, Ghazarian, & Fernandez- Esquer, 2012). Once the student is able to translate as a language broker for parents or their family members, it can affect the student's academics because their attendance at school suffers (Faulstich-Orellana, 2003). Aside from translating and language brokering, Newcomers often aid in household chores, cooking, and caring for siblings (Faulstich- Orellana, 2003).

Additionally, Newcomers' parents may not get involved with the school for various reasons: they do not question the teacher, they view the teacher as a professional, they may not welcome parenting advice, and/or they cannot help their kids with homework because of their own limited formal education (Trumbull et al., 2001). Parents who have little education and cannot read and write fluently in their native language or English are often unable to help their children with school assignments (Suarez-Orozco, 2010). However, Newcomer parents do support their student's education by inquiring

about their education (Trumbul et al., 2001). Overall, having familial attachments can positively support the Newcomers to finish their studies for a better life (Merali, 2005).

Individual Factors. The Newcomers are also individuals with varied experiences. Newcomer students can be unaccompanied refugee minors who have left their native country due to warfare, political conflict, destructive forces, population displacement, and poverty (Carlson et al., 2012). Newcomers can come to the United States as refugees, who are individuals that leave their country of origin because they fear persecution related to race, religion, nationality, social group membership, or political orientation (United Nation High Commissioner for refugees, 2002). Some Newcomers can experience posttraumatic stress disorder due to murder, rape, poverty, and torment before arriving to their host country (Carlson et al., 2012; Stermac et al., 2010).

Contributing factors to academic resilience. Individuals who are self-motivated and determined positively affect their academic resilience (Smokowski et al., 2014). Transitioning can be stressful for adolescents and affect their attitude and motivation (McMahan et al., 2011). When Newcomers enroll in a high school, they face tremendous challenges of having to learn the host school's language, norms, and culture, which can be difficult to master. Therefore, Newcomers must have a great deal of control to be confident when dealing with challenging academic problems (Kapikiran, 2012). However, Newcomers tend not to give up in demanding situations because they believe a challenge will lead to achievement (Kapikiran, 2012). Moreover, Newcomers may welcome a change in their lives because of the violence they experienced in war-torn countries. Resilient Newcomers are motivated to fulfill their basic human needs for:

affection, belonging, admiration, identity, and overcoming adversities (Wasonga et al., 2003). Newcomers who are successful understand the world around them and engage in shaping their own futures through regular school attendance and participation in extra-curricular activities (Leonard, 2011). Factors such as contributing in class, being present in class, paying attention, completing and submitting homework on time result in academic success (Suarez-Orozco et al., 2010). Even when teachers have low expectations, some students develop a fierce determination to excel in school (Gay, 2000).

Barriers to academic resilience. The Newcomer often faces psychological challenges, acculturative stress, traumatic stress, and/or behavioral challenges (Stermac et al., 2010).

Psychological challenges. The psychological challenges hail from the migration stress of leaving everything behind, including a familiar environment, friends, family, homes, pets, and social networking, and having to start all over again. Some parents of Newcomers come to the United States with educational degrees for professions that will not accept foreign degrees. As a result, the parents have to get minimal-paying jobs to support the family. Newcomers then contribute to the family household when they are able.

Acculturative stress. The acculturative stress of adapting to a new social and cultural context occurs with new cultural practices, new languages, different expectations, and often-attending failing schools. Many Newcomers arrive in the U.S. with limited or no English language proficiency and find it difficult to acculturate to the

host culture (Yeh, Okubo, Ma, Shea, Ou, & Pituc, 2008). Acculturation can be unidirectional, wherein the Newcomer can adopt the host-culture behaviors and values, while disregarding their own cultural values (Yeh et al., 2008). The Newcomer's age at migration is another factor in academic success, because the adjustment to a new language, culture, and educational system can be challenging for older children who migrate (Gindling & Poggio, 2012).

Traumatic stress. Traumatic stress entails facing economic, political, and social adversity (Roxas & Roy, 2012). Trauma can affect the way Newcomers learn. Newcomers may encounter trauma through their entire refugee experience of flight to resettlement, dehumanizing experiences in refugee camps or detention centers, and violence in home countries. This trauma may cause behavioral challenges. Behavioral challenges include the grief of leaving their native country, anxiety of beginning a new life, survivor guilt for leaving others behind, and trauma-induced memory problems that can affect academic success (Bal & Perzigian, 2013).

Conclusion

This chapter introduced the Ecological Theory of Human Development, along with a summary of the existing research on the factors that support or constrain the academic resilience of Newcomers. The Ecological Theory of Human Development demonstrates how Newcomers interact with all levels of the environment, and how each experience affects them socially, culturally, and academically. This study explores how the participants interact with their environment and the affect it has on their academic resilience. The purpose of this study is to explore the factors that support or constrain the

academic resilience in Newcomers. The following chapter explores the methodology used to conduct the study.

CHAPTER THREE METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the methodology of the study, including the research methods, research site, participant selection, data collection methods, and data analysis techniques. The main research question guiding this study is: What factors support or constrain the academic resilience of Newcomers? The sub question is: How do the family, school, community, and societal factors support or constrain Newcomers' academic success?

Research Methods

Qualitative research

The researcher utilizes a qualitative methodology to examine the factors that support or constrain the academic resilience of Newcomers. Qualitative methods place the researcher in the world of the participants. The Newcomers' experiences essentially serve as a series of field notes, interviews, conversations, recordings, and memos as data. In qualitative research, the researcher takes a naturalistic approach when interpreting the results, trying to make sense of the phenomena by establishing patterns or themes. Finally, the researcher produces a written report that represents the voices of the participants (Creswell, 2007). Qualitative methodology allows for an increase understanding of the participants' experiences from their own voices.

This qualitative study is based on Creswell's (2007) nine characteristics of qualitative research. Table 1 describes Creswell's nine characteristics and details of how the researcher applied these to the study.

Table 1

Creswell's Nine Characteristics of Qualitative Research

Characteristic	Description	How the Researcher will apply it to the study
Natural setting	The investigator gathers data in the area where the participants experience the problem.	This study takes place at the school the participants attend to have face-to-face interactions.
Researcher as key instrument	The investigator gathers data by inspecting documents, surveilling, and interviewing; the investigator does not rely on developed instruments.	The researcher collects documents (e.g., student schedules, transcripts, and other artifacts that aid the research), and conducts in-depth semi-structured interviews of four participants for the case study.
Researchers use multiple sources of data	Rather than relying on a single data source.	The researcher reviews and analyzes documents such as academic transcripts, audio transcripts of the interviews, and other materials.
Inductive data analysis	Creates patterns, categories, and themes to form a process.	The researcher transcribes the audiotapes and codes the emerging themes to triangulate with observation field notes and documents.
Participants' meanings	The investigator focuses on the participants meaning about the problem.	The researcher validates the study by having the participants' check their own contributions.
Research is an emergent design	That the process is not prearranged, and it changes after the	The researcher realizes working with participants during their lunchtime might not be conducive

	investigator starts to collect data.	to the study, and the researcher changes the time frame to get more participants.
Theoretical lens	The investigator uses a theoretical lens for the study.	The researcher uses a theoretical lens based on Ecological Theory of Human Development.
Interpretive inquiry	The investigation can have different explanations by readers, participants, and researchers.	The participants engage in validating their contributions by member checking.
Holistic account	The investigation reports multiple viewpoints.	The focus group of this study is divided into three groups based on academic achievement, with four students selected from the focus groups for an in-depth study.

Note. Adapted from “Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches” by Creswell, J.W. (2007). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. Copyright 2007 by Sage Publications, Inc.

The case study method. This research utilizes a qualitative case study methodology to answer the research questions. In *Qualitative Research and Case Study Application in Education*, Merriam (1998) states, “By concentrating upon a single phenomenon or entity (the case), this approach seeks to describe the phenomenon in depth” (p. 7). Merriam describes the reason for selecting case study as its uniqueness for what it can reveal about a phenomenon which people would otherwise not have access. Moreover, case studies in education present basic information in areas where little research exists (Merriam, 1998). Creswell (2007) also states that case studies are investigations of bound systems over time, through multiple sources of information.

In *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing among Five Approaches*, Creswell (2007) notes, “In a collective case study (or multiple case study), the one issue

or concern is again selected, but the inquirer selects multiple case studies to illustrate the issue” (p. 97). Creswell (2007) concludes the researcher should choose no more than four or five cases. The cases should also show different perspectives on the problem, process, or event that the researcher wants to portray, but also select ordinary cases, accessible cases, or unusual cases. In this study, the cases are the Newcomers, whose experiences represent a spectrum of academic resilience despite the challenges they encountered in their lives.

The Research Site

The Newcomer Center at Diversity High School (pseudonym) is located in the Rocky Mountain School District (pseudonym) and serves as the research site for the study. The school is the only high school in the district that houses a Newcomer Center.

Rocky Mountain School District

Diversity High School (DHS) is in the Rocky Mountain Public School District (RMSD). This district consists of 182 schools: 86 elementary schools, 20 elementary/middle schools, four elementary/middle/high schools, 22 middle schools, 19 middle/high schools, and 31 high schools. There are currently 90,150 students enrolled in RMSD; of those, there are 34,413 English Language Learners and, among those, there are 29,755 students receiving English Language Acquisition (ELA) services (Rocky Mountain Public Schools, 2014). There are more than 170 languages spoken in the district, with the prevalent languages including Spanish, Vietnamese, Arabic, Karen, Burmese, Somali, Amharic, Russian, and Nepali. The graduation rate is 62.8% and college enrollment is 47%. The dropout rate is 4.5%, and 72% of students are on free and

reduced-price lunch (Rocky Mountain Public Schools, 2014). The study will focus on the Newcomer students enrolled at Diversity High School.

Diversity High School. The population of Diversity High School (DHS) constantly changes as immigrants and refugees from all over the globe enroll in the school. DHS has 1,403 total students, including 372 non-exited English Language Learners, 262 exited English Language Learners, and 769 native English speakers (Rocky Mountain Public School, 2014). There are 14 American Indian or Alaskan Natives (1%), 182 Asians (13%), 337 blacks or African Americans (24%), 446 Hispanics or Latinos (31.8%), 376 Caucasians (26.8%), two Native Hawaiians or Pacific Islanders (.01%), and 46 of two or more races (3.3%) (RMS, 2014). DHS has 72.7% students receiving free or reduced-price lunch, a 78.2% graduation rate, and a 2.7% dropout rate (RMSD, 2014). For the 2015-2016 academic school year, the administrators designated 200 slots for English Language Learners to ensure that DHS maintains a diverse student population (Waters, 2015).

DHS Newcomer Center. At DHS, when Newcomer students enroll, they submit a Home Language Questionnaire (see Appendix A), Parent Permission Form (see Appendix B), and analysis of transcripts (see Appendix C), and they complete the WIDA Access Placement Test (W-APT) to identify program placement (RMSD, 2014).

DHS uses the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) ACCESS to monitor and place the students. This is an annual assessment to meet the accountability requirements of No Child Left Behind. WIDA assesses students in four domains of the English language: speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Each grade

level has different scale and score ranges that associate with each proficiency level.

Students scoring proficiency levels of bridging (5) and reaching (6) are proficient in English and placed in mainstream English classes (WIDA, 2016). Table 2 illustrates the WIDA scale used for placement along with the student placement that DHS used to place Newcomer students.

Table 2

WIDA Performance Band with Diversity High School Levels

WIDA Score	Performance Band	Performance Definition	Diversity High School Program
600	Reaching (6)	Language that meets all criteria through level 5	Mainstream
500	Bridging (5)	Technical and abstract content-area language Words and expression with shades of meaning across content areas	Exit ELA 2 into Mainstream
400	Expanding (4)	Specific and some technical content-area language Words or expressions with multiple meanings across content areas	ELA 2
300	Developing (3)	Specific content language, including expression Words and expression with common collocations and idioms across content areas	ELA 1 or ELA 2
200	Emerging (2)	General content words and expressions, including cognates Social and instructional words and expressions across content areas	ELA 1
100	Entering (1)	General content-related words Everyday social and instructional words and expressions	Newcomer Center

Note. The WIDA performance band is from WIDA and DHS placement criteria. Comes from WIDA and RMSD (2015).

The RMS district screening questionnaire poses questions related to Newcomers' formal education, literacy in their native language and English, and enrollment in the United States school system (RMS, 2008). When granted enrollment, parents have three choices for their child: (a) learn English while receiving some support in their native

language; (b) learn English as a second language in English speaking classes with teachers trained to provide extra support in learning English (English Language Acquisition ELA); or (c) learn English in mainstream English classes with specially trained teachers (RMSD, 2008). DHS identifies a student as a Newcomer if they meet all of the following criteria: (a) a history of interrupted or limited formal education; (b) a WIDA-ACCESS Placement Test (W-APT) score that is not English proficient (if no score is available, the student has minimal literacy in both their native language and in English); and (c) the student enrolls in a school in the United States for two or fewer semesters (Newcomer Centers, 2016). Currently, there are 24 students enrolled in the DHS Newcomer Center; 17 are males and seven are females. Table 3 illustrates the students' country of origin, and Table 4 illustrates the languages spoken by the Newcomers.

Table 3

Country of Origin of Newcomers

Country of Origin	# of students
Bhutan	2
Columbia	1
El Salvador	5
Eritrea	1
Ethiopia	3
Federated States of Micronesia	1
Honduras	1
Mexico	3
Sudan	3
Syria	2
Tajikistan	1
Venezuela	1

Note. Country of Origin of Newcomers is based on the Newcomer Class at DHS 2016-2017.

Table 4

Languages Spoken by Newcomers

Language	Frequency
Arabic	5
Charukesi	1
Nepali	2
Russian	2
Spanish	11
Tigrigna	3

Note. Language of Newcomers is based on the Newcomer Class at DHS 2016-2017.

In the Newcomer program at DHS, students learn math, science, and social studies content, along with the English language and U.S. school culture (Diversity High School, 2015). Newcomer classes are separate from the mainstream classes. At DHS, the Newcomer Center provides native language support through 14 bilingual paraprofessionals who serve as a link or bridge between the academic and familial worlds (Diversity High School, 2015). The paraprofessionals are the first to welcome the Newcomer and their family to DHS. They walk the family through the registration process; serve as interpreters between the family and school personnel, and assist in the Newcomer's classes as interpreters and translators. The exit criteria for Newcomers who enroll in the English Language Acquisition (ELA) program is based on the student's reading, writing, speaking, and listening proficiencies. The indicators from WIDA are used by the teachers to base their decision to exit the Newcomer from the Newcomer

Center to the ELA program. Table 5 illustrates the exit criteria that Newcomers must demonstrate proficiency in the following indicators to move into the ELA program.

Table 5

Newcomer Exit Criteria

Reading	Writing	Speaking	Listening
Associate letters and blends with sounds and objects.	Respond to text and conversations in complete sentences (yes/no, choices, how questions)	Use gestures, single words, and simple phrases during basic conversations.	Follow verbally or nonverbally one-step directions in 1:1 and group situations.
Respond to yes/no questions and how questions based on short texts.	Sentence/ paragraph frame completion	Communicate needs in social and academic settings.	Understand key words, phrases, and simple sentences.
Read phrases and simple sentences in familiar contexts.	Use capitals, end punctuation, simple present, present continuous,	Use both social and academic-learned vocabulary in context.	Match everyday oral information to pictures, diagrams, or photograph.
Recognize high frequency words in context.	simple past, and future tense will and going to.	Ask questions to obtain and clarify information using single words and phrases.	

Note. The source is Hanson, Jennifer, Diversity High School, Exit Criteria for Newcomers.

Participant Selection

The researcher defined a set of operational criteria to identify participants for the study (Yin, 2011). These include: (a) current senior standing; (b) enrolled into the Newcomer Center during their first year of enrollment at school; (c) on time to graduate with 180 or more credits; and (d) self-described as academically resilient. The criterion established selected participants who were academically successful.

The researcher requested that the school counselors identify participants for the study who met the aforementioned criteria. The counselors sent out invitations to students with a request to attend an informational meeting about the study. According to the counselors, the Newcomer students who received the invitation all fit the aforementioned criteria. Table 6 illustrates that the students who attended the informational session met the criteria.

Table 6

Summary of Student Criteria for Meeting Attendees

Country of Origin	Senior Standing	Enrolled Newcomer	On-Time Graduate
Bhutan	Yes	2013-2014	Yes- 190 Credits
Burma	Yes	2012-2013	Yes- 240 Credits
Burma	Yes	2011-2012	Yes- 240 Credits
Cambodia	Yes	2007-2008	Yes- 222.5 Credits
Congo	Yes	2012-2013	Yes- 245 Credits
Congo	Yes	2012-2013	Yes- 245 Credits
Eritrea	Yes	2012-2013	Yes- 215 Credits
Ethiopia	Yes	2012-2013	Yes- 215 Credits
Ethiopia	Yes	2013-2014	Yes- 227.5 Credits
Ethiopia	Yes	2011-2012	Yes- 210 Credits
Ethiopia	Yes	2013-2014	Yes- 232.5 Credits
Ethiopia	Yes	2009-2010	Yes- 245 Credits
Ghana	Yes	2010-2011	Yes- 180.5 Credits
Guatemala	Yes	2013-2014	Yes- 180 Credits
India	Yes	2012-2013	Yes- 187.5Credits
Iraq	Yes	2012-2013	Yes- 235 Credits
Iraq	Yes	2012-2013	Yes- 265 Credits
Iraq	Yes	2009-2010	Yes- 245 Credits
Kenya	Yes	2010-2011	Yes- 197.5 Credits

Kenya	Yes	2011-2012	Yes- 210 Credits
Libya	Yes	2013-2014	Yes- 185 Credits
Malaysia	Yes	2012-2013	Yes- 265 Credits
Mexico	Yes	2012-2013	Yes- 185 Credits
Mexico	Yes	2012-2013	Yes- 255 Credits
Mexico	Yes	2012-2013	Yes- 240 Credits
Morocco	Yes	2012-2013	Yes- 255 Credits
Myanmar	Yes	2012-2013	Yes- 217.5 Credits
Republic Ivory Coast	Yes	2013-2014	Yes- 220 Credits
Rwanda	Yes	2012-2013	Yes- 240 Credits
Somalia	Yes	2013-2014	Yes- 180 Credits
Somalia	Yes	2013-2014	Yes- 240 Credits
Somalia	Yes	2007-2008	Yes- 212.5 Credits
Somalia	Yes	2013-2014	Yes- 207.5 Credits
Somalia	Yes	2012-2013	Yes- 180 Credits
Vietnam	Yes	2014-2015	Yes- 230 Credits
Zhongshan China	Yes	2011-2012	Yes- 265 Credits

Note: To be considered on time to graduate, seniors should have at least 180 credits when they begin their senior year.

Focus group participants

Focus groups are effective and save time (Seidman, 2006) because they allow the researcher to identify which participants are willing to tell their stories. From the group of students who participated in the information session, 18 submitted their consent forms

(see Appendix D and Appendix E) and questionnaires. Those 18 received an invitation to participate in one of three focus groups. The participants formed three equal groups of six participants: a low, medium, and high group based on their grade-point average. The researcher divided the participants equally based on the following GPA groups: high (3.4 and above), middle (2.9-3.3), and low (below a 2.9). Table 7 illustrates the participants as represented by their cultural groups.

Table 7

Student GPAs Sorted by Focus Group

Student Country	GPA	Group Assignment
Congo	1.804	Low
Rwanda	2.047	Low
Eritrea	2.146	Low
Somalia	2.278	Low
Congo	2.334	Low
Nepal	2.867	Low
Ethiopia	2.937	Middle
Thailand	2.94	Middle
Ethiopia	3.001	Middle
Thailand	3.09	Middle
Ethiopia	3.256	Middle
Somalia	3.376	Middle
Morocco	3.476	High

Sudan	3.511	High
Kenya	3.691	High
Ghana	3.739	High
Iraq	3.985	High
Cambodia	4.321	High

Note. Country of origin and GPA of Newcomers are based on the participants' transcripts.

Case study participants

The selected case study participants followed the guidelines of: (a) one participant from the low and high GPA focus groups, (b) two participants from the middle GPA focus group, (c) telling case of resilience, and (d) their willingness to participate further in the study. A telling case of resilience includes enrollment in school plus experiences with refugee status and violence. The selected participants represented four case studies of adversity and academic resilience. The researcher selected Simon (pseudonym) because of his willingness to tell his story. After signing the consent forms, he approached the researcher with his college essay and asked what was required to participate in the study. During the focus group, Simon opened up about his immigration story. His family left Africa because of the violence. The second participant, Shamarke (pseudonym), was detailed and reflective in his responses during the focus group interview; he was also eager to participate further and shared more details about his story after the initial interview. After the group interview, he provided a transcript from a presentation he delivered about his refugee experience to U.S. Congress. The third participant, Samuel (pseudonym), became emotional during the focus group interview as

he shared personal information about his family. The researcher believed there was more to his story. The final participant, Tina (pseudonym), described how her father had to leave his family behind in Cambodia for his own safety for a year. During the focus group interview, Tina shared how his absence affected her education. Table 8 is a summary of the case study participant characteristics.

Table 8

Summary of Case Study Participant Characteristics

Name	Age	Country	Immigrant Status	Language	Grade	GPA	Group
Simon	19	Congo	Refugee	French	12	1.804	Low
Shamarke	18	Ethiopia	Asylum	Amharic	12	2.937	Middle
Samuel	18	Somalia	Resident	Somali	12	3.376	Middle
Tina	19	Cambodia	Asylum	Khmer	12	4.321	High

Note. Country of origin and language of Newcomers are based on the data gathered in the interviews.

Data Collection Methods

The researcher administered a questionnaire (see Appendix F) to the participants that submitted their consent form. The researcher also conducted semi-structured interviews (see Appendix H) with the 18 focus group participants. Similarly, the researcher performed semi-structured interviews (see Appendix I) with the four case study participants. Likewise, the researcher collected documents (see Appendix G) from all the participants who submitted their consent form. The documents – academic transcripts, attendance records, and state assessment scores – related to their academic resilience.

Questionnaire

18 participants completed a questionnaire (see Appendix F), or an instrument used to collect data about individuals (Siniscalco & Auriat, 2005). All 20 questions were open ended. Open-ended questions usually begin with what or how to focus on what the participants bring forth (Creswell & Clark, 2011; Kvale, 2007). The questionnaire contained three sections. The first section contained nine questions that elicited their demographic information, such as age, country of origin, reason for leaving their native country, and their native educational experiences. The second section had nine questions that included open-ended questions about their parents/guardians' education and the participants' post-graduate plans. The last section entailed two questions that asked about any positive or negative influences on their academic experience; specifically, this focused on information not available on the students' academic records. The questionnaire allowed the researcher to gain insight into each participant's background and educational experiences in order to select four case participants.

Interviews

This study included semi-structured life-world interviews with the 18 focus group (Appendix H) participants and the four case study (see Appendix I) participants. According to Kvale (2007), "...the semi-structured life-world interview seeks to obtain descriptions of the life-world of the interviewee with respect to interpreting the meaning of the described phenomenon" (p. 51). The purpose of interviews was to provide information about the events participants witnessed and experienced, the participants' own reactions to those experiences, and their own views (Hammersley, 2014).

The focus group discussions focused on the participants' viewpoints of their academic progress as Newcomers. Focus group interviews usually consist of six to 10 participants and one facilitator (Kvale, 2007). Open-ended questions allow the participants to answer the questions as they choose (Seidman, 2006). The researcher asked three focus groups of six participants each the same questions to elicit different perspectives on the topic; the participants voluntarily answered. Fifteen open-ended questions elicited information about academic resilience and how each of the following either assisted or inhibited academic resilience; these included topics such as family, school, Newcomer program, community, and society. The group had one hour to answer the 15 questions.

The four case study interviews focused on an in-depth understanding of their personal and academic experiences. The case study interview included open-ended questions that allowed for the reconstruction of participants' experience related to the development of academic resilience. The first interview consisted of 10 questions for one hour. The questions inquired about the motivation of the individual, as well as how the family supported or inhibited academic resilience. The second interview had 10 questions that lasted one hour. The questions probed if their schooling supported or inhibited their academic resilience. The last set of questions included nine questions for one hour. The questions asked how community and society supported or inhibited academic resilience. All interviews were face-to-face and audio-recorded with handwritten notes throughout the interview. The researcher transcribed the interviews using a computer-based word processing program and analyzed all interviews.

Documents

The research study also included document review and analysis. Radwan (2009) states that, “A document is any substance that gives information about the investigated phenomenon and exists independently of the researcher’s actions” (p. 35). Documents pertaining to the academic resilience of case study participants included transcripts, attendance records, and state assessment records. The researcher also examined student-generated written materials related to the participants’ academic resilience such as web-based articles, college essays, and student-made presentations that confirmed their story. Such documents are of great value in that they enrich the researcher’s knowledge about students’ academic resilience (Radwan, 2009).

Data collection plan

The data collected for this study included: questionnaires, focus group interviews, case study interviews, and document analysis related to case study participants’ academic progress and the DHS Newcomer Program. Table 9 summarizes the data collection process used in the study.

Table 9

Data Collection Plan

Collection Strategy	Data Type	Source	Duration	Location	Timeline
Questionnaire	Questionnaire responses (qualitative)	20 Newcomer students	30 minutes	Community room or home	5 days
Focus Group Interviews	Audio recordings and transcripts of interviews	18 Newcomer students (3 groups of 6)	60 minutes	Community room	1 week
Case Study Interviews	Audio recording and transcripts of interviews	4 Newcomer students	Three 60-minute sessions	Community room	1 month
Document Analysis	Documents such as academic records, college essays, transcripts from presentations	4 Newcomer students	n/a	Discretion of the researcher/ participant	1 week

Data Collection & Analysis

Figure 3 illustrates the stages of data collection and analysis of this study, followed by an in-depth description of the methods used for data collection and analysis.

Figure 3

Data collection and analysis process

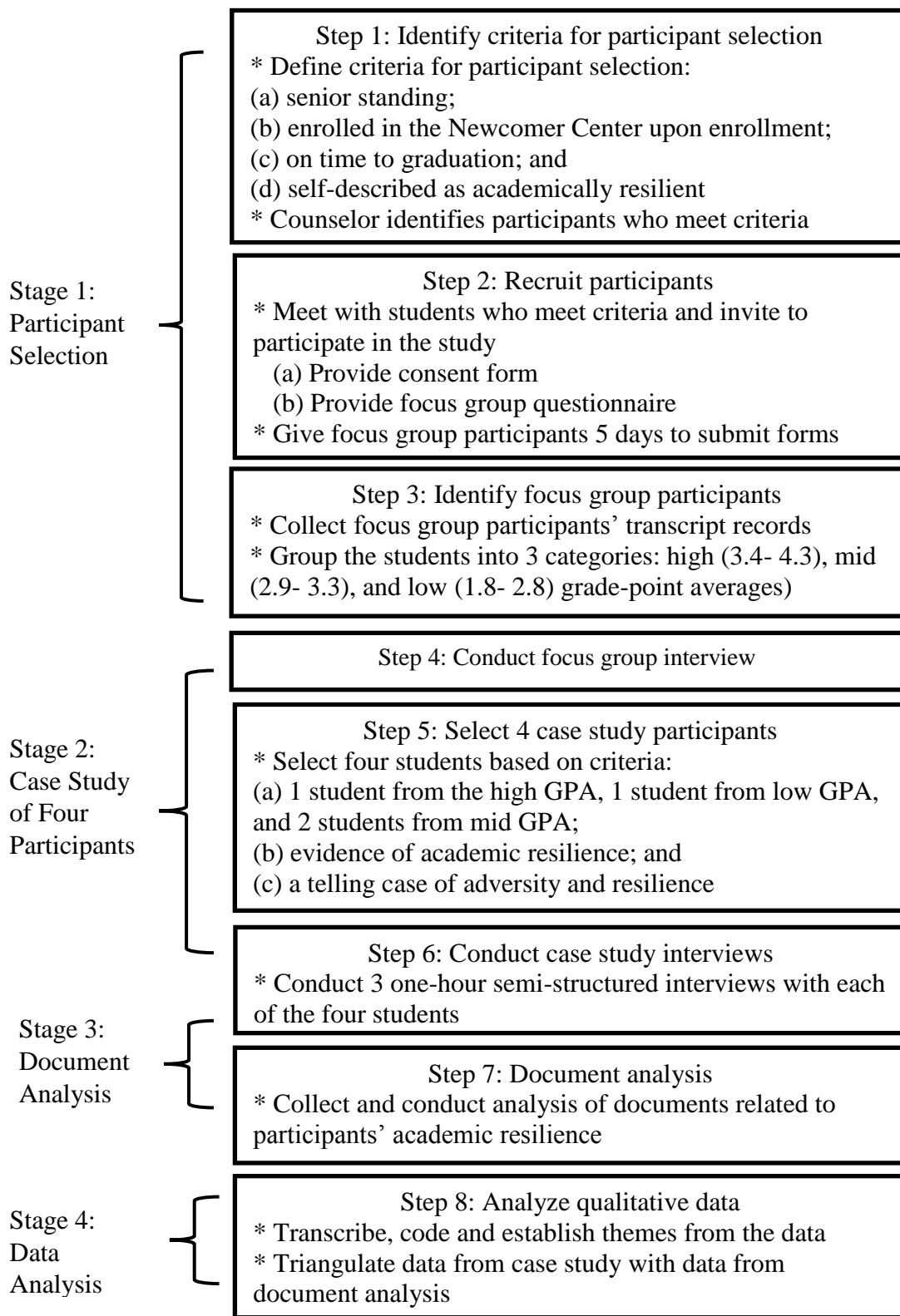


Figure 3. Summary of data collection and analysis that the researcher conducted.

The research took place in four stages. The first stage focused on participant selection. The second stage focused on case studies of four participants. The third stage focused on document analysis. The last stage focused on the analysis of the data.

First stage: Participant selection

The first stage of the research focused on participant selection. First, the researcher defined a set of operational criteria to identify participants for the study (Yin, 2011); these included: (a) current senior standing; (b) enrolled into the Newcomer Center during their first year of enrollment; (c) on time to graduate with 180 credits or above; and (d) self-described as academically resilient. The researcher asked the school counselors to identify participants for the study who met the aforementioned criteria. The counselors sent out invitations to 36 students with a request to attend an informational meeting about the study.

Second, the researcher conducted an informational meeting with 36 Newcomer students during their 55-minute lunch period to explain the study and ask students to participate. The researcher explained that the purpose of the study was to determine the factors that support or constrain academic success in Newcomers, and the results of this study could assist educators who teach Newcomer students. Students received an informed consent form and RMSD permission to release student records. The researcher asked the 36 participants to return the forms within one week to the counselors. Of the 36 participants, 18 students provided the researcher with informed consent (see Appendix D and Appendix E) and the permission to release records (see Appendix E). The researcher gave the Newcomers a focus group questionnaire to return within five days (see

Appendix F). The 18 students filled out a demographic questionnaire that included information such as age, gender, ethnicity/nationality, country of birth, household composition, languages spoken, expected date of graduation, applied colleges and parental educational level. In the open-ended section of the questionnaire, participants listed any factors that contribute to academic success and barriers that inhibit academic success.

Third, the researcher obtained all 18 of the participants' school schedules and transcripts from the Newcomers' academic counselor. Based on the academic data, the researcher divided the participants equally based on the following GPA groups: high (3.4 and above), middle (2.9-3.3), and low (below a 2.9); see Table 7. Each focus group had six participants based on Kvale (2007) recommendations of six to 10 participants.

Second stage: Case study of four participants

The second stage focused on case studies of four participants. Each focus group met during their 55-minute lunch break for whole group interviews in the community room (Appendix H). The purpose of the focus group was to explore the students' perception of their academic success, and common factors and barriers that contribute to or inhibit academic resilience from each grade-point average group. The researcher used the findings of the questionnaire and focus group interviews to identify four case study participants.

The participants selected for the case study were chosen according to the following criteria: (a) GPA, (b) telling case of resilience, and (c) willingness to share their story. First, one participant was selected from the low GPA category (1.8- 2.8), one

participant from the high GPA category (3.4- 4.3), and two participants from the middle GPA category (2.9- 3.3) based on the aforementioned criteria of (b) telling case of resilience and (c) willingness to share their story. Second, the selected participants represented a telling case of resilience and were willing to share their story. Chanock (2014), stated, “A ‘telling’ case enables the analyst to establish theoretically valid connections between events and phenomena.” In this study, the four participants identified as telling cases of resilience are based on refugee status and environmental adversities such as hardship, distress, and trauma from death of parents, feeling unsafe, violence, and poverty. The participants identified as a telling case were also enrolled at DHS and making academic progress based on their transcripts. Last, the participants were all willing to participate in the study.

The researcher then conducted three semi-structured life-world interviews with each of the four case study participants (see Appendix I). The four case study participants participated in three face-to-face interviews that provided an in-depth understanding of the Newcomers’ life experiences. There were three interviews of one hour for a total of three hours. The interview data generated an understanding of the participants’ life stories, details of their educational experiences, and academic resilience.

The interviews were audio recorded to preserve the communication of the participant and to allow the researcher to review the source for accuracy (Seidman, 2006). After each interview, the researcher transcribed each of the audio-recorded interviews on a computer-based word processing program. Transcribing the interviews involved listening to the interviews multiple times to type verbatim what the participant

was saying. The transcripts required sorting and analyzing to get information that was relevant to the study.

Third stage: Document analysis

The third stage involved the analysis of the collected documents. The researcher collected and analyzed documents related to the participants' academic resilience. The goal of this stage was to analyze relevant documents to determine the academic success of the participants. The documents included the following: (a) academic transcripts that included the participants' academic credits, ACT scores and state assessment scores (math, reading, and writing), (b) documents related to participants' story that demonstrated their academic resilience, and (c) internet articles related to students' experiences. The researcher analyzed the documents to corroborate the participants' academic success. The counselors provided the researcher with the participants' transcripts when the participants signed and submitted the RMSD permission to release the student records form received during the informational meeting. The researcher reviewed the academic transcripts to complete the following:

- confirm the case study participants' GPAs;
- match the timeline of the participants' self-described adversities with the dates on the transcript to determine whether the adversities impacted their GPAs;
- calculate academic credits to confirm that each participant was on track to graduate;

- corroborate ACT scores and college acceptance based on their eligibility index scores (a score that calculated based on the students GPA and ACT/ SAT score); and
- assess the Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP)'s state-mandated assessments scores for math, reading, and writing with the participants' time of learning English.

The researcher collected other relevant documents, including student-generated presentations about their respective immigration stories. A participant provided a copy of his college essay, detailing his life experiences. Another participant provided a copy of his audio transcripts of a speech he made to Congress about his refugee experience. Two participants provided the researcher with a transcript of presentations they gave about their immigration stories they made at a DHS school assembly about diversity. Last, the researcher examined 10 electronic articles that described political unrest of the Congo and Eritrea related to the participants' experiences to validate the timelines described by two participants.

Fourth stage: Data analysis

The fourth stage involved analyzing the collected data. Analyzing data can be complicated if not organized. There should be order, structure, and meaning to the information collected (Rossman & Rallis, 2012; Seidman, 2006). Rossman and Rallis (2012) recommend various steps in analyzing the discourse from audiotapes.

First, it is necessary to organize the data. The researcher created a focus group file that had subfolders of the three GPA groups, which contained the scanned permission

forms, questionnaire, and interview transcript from the group. The researcher made individual folders for each of the four participants. The folders contained all the documents that pertained to each participant (i.e., permission form, questionnaire, academic transcript, transcript from the focus group interview, transcript from the case study interview, and other documents that the participants submitted to the researcher).

Second, researchers must become familiar with their data. Transcribing the data allowed the researcher to become acquainted with data related to the four participants. In order to transform the data into manageable chunks, the researcher examined and sorted parts of each of the participant's questionnaire and interview into two parts: before and after they arrived to the U.S. Information prior to U.S arrival provided the context of the adversities that the participants had to endure in their native home. The questionnaire and interview data on after the participants arrived to the U.S. was divided into small units by separating the questionnaire and interview transcripts by the sub-questions (family, school, community, and society). The researcher then divided the first step into smaller units, separating the data into supporting and constraining factors within the four structure systems (family, school, community, and society).

Third, it is necessary to identify the categories and generate themes. Coding data is another critical stage of the research process. Rossman and Rallis (2012) stated that categories are variables that describe the data with a word or phrase. The researcher followed an open-coding approach that entailed examination of all the text for categories until the data became saturated. Reading from the supporting and constraining four structure systems, the researcher highlighted, bracketed, and underlined the quotes of

interest, recurring ideas or language to find commonalities in the data. The coded data created two codes. The researcher interpreted the first set of codes as evidence for academic resilience. To extract the ideas further, the second layer of coding brought the data to a higher conceptual level by acknowledging the codes in the first layer (Yin, 2011). A table established all the codes, tagged to a participant, and the location of the quotes. Coding allowed the researcher to sort the items into refined groups (Yin, 2011). The researcher composed themes. The researcher analyzed the data for frequency of used words by tallying up the words to conclude as indicators for the four structure systems. The next step in analyzing the data was creating themes. Recurring categories were pulled together to create themes from the commonalties and differences in the data. The researcher repeated the process until reaching saturation, which is a signal of completion at the point when new data confirm the themes and a conclusion is reached (Merriam, 1998).

According to Merriam (1998), trustworthiness consists of three components: transferable, dependable, and confirmable. Transferable components appear as generalizations across the focus groups and the stories of the case study participants. Dependable components become evident in the conclusion that the researcher finds, particularly if the study design would yield the same results if repeated. Member checking verified conformability, while triangulation checked for credibility. The researcher triangulated all the pieces of evidence, meaning, “multiple sources of data; multiple points in time, or a variety of methods [were] used to build the picture [of the subject under investigation]” (Rossman and Rallis, 2012, p. 65). Triangulation also

corroborated academic resilience with the interview transcriptions, the archival documents, and cultural documentation collected from the participants.

Rossmann and Rallis (2012) note that “triangulation is multiple sources of data, multiple points in time, or a variety of methods are used to build the picture that you are investigating” (p. 65). This approach allowed the researcher to use various data to establish validity in the research findings. The triangulation process corroborated academic resilience with the interview transcriptions, the archival documents, documents provided to the researcher by the participants, and the internet articles that were found by the researcher. Document analysis allowed the researcher to clarify any discrepancies in the questionnaires and interviews. Rossmann and Rallis (2012) noted, “Through observing, interviewing, and documenting and analyzing material culture, qualitative researchers capture and represent the richness, texture, and depth of what they study” (p. 169).

Next, interpreting the data was necessary. At this stage, the narrative/story begins to form. The researcher began to make sense of the data. When patterns emerge beyond a single set of data, it becomes a good basis for interpretation (Yin, 2011). The subsequent chapter will detail the findings.

Human Subjects Protections

Privacy and Confidentiality

All the data collected in the study were on a password-protected computer to ensure the researcher was the only one with access. The researcher retained the data for one year after study completion. The study did not contain information that could identify

the participants. The study used pseudonyms for the participants, school, and school district. In the first stage, the researcher scanned and stored the student schedule, consent/assent forms, and focus group questionnaire on a password-protected computer. The voice recordings tapes from the first and second stages had labels with the pseudonym of the interviewee in order to maintain confidentiality. The students selected their own pseudonyms. The researcher kept the audio recordings until they were transcribed, then destroyed them. The transcripts and documents were be on a password-protected computer.

Ethics

This study took place at Diversity High School, which is located in the district that the researcher is employed at. The researcher clarified when students agreed to participate in the study that their participation would not affect their academics. Students might have felt coerced into the study because the researcher was an educator there; however, the study was voluntary and there was no penalty if they chose not to participate. They could have opted out at any time during the study.

Possible Risks

The researcher took steps to minimize the risks in this study. Even so, the participants may have experienced some discomfort related to the study. Potential risks associated with the research could have been emotional discomfort in retelling their refugee stories. The researcher informed the school psychologist of the study and potential risks. If the students expressed discomfort, the researcher referred the participant to the school psychologist. Furthermore, the participants were free to refuse to

participate and were free to withdraw consent at any time during the study. There was no penalty or unfair treatment if the newcomers decided not to participate or drop out of the study.

Limitations

There were various limitations in this study. First, case studies make generalized statements about populations. However, with Newcomers, it is difficult to generalize because each student comes with their own unique life experiences. Each of those experiences may affect the student differently. Another limitation on generalization was the study participants; three of the participants were from Africa (Congo, Eritrea, and Somalia), and one was from Cambodia. There was not adequate representation of the countries where the majority of immigrants come from.

The second limitation was the time constraint. The study lasted one school year with one semester for in-depth interviews of the participants. Another limitation on time was the criterion of “on time to graduate” limiting the sample size; however, it focused on the resilience piece of the study.

The third limitation was that the methodology generated only the students’ perspectives and not the perspectives of the people involved in the students’ lives. The study did not acquire the parents’/guardians’, teachers’, or peers’ perspectives because of the time constraints, but it would have been beneficial to get the full story of the student from different perspectives.

The last limitation was accessibility; the study was only at one high school since DHS is the only high school in the district to house a Newcomer program.

CHAPTER FOUR FINDINGS

This study describes the factors that support the academic resilience of Newcomers and the factors that constrain their academic resilience. The researcher begins with a brief introduction summarizing each participant's story to demonstrate the adversities they experienced before arriving to the United States. This is followed by a description of each participant's definition of success and their academic success at Diversity High School. Next, the findings are presented based on the themes that emerged from the data related to the factors that support or constrain the academic resilience of Newcomers.

The Participants

During the course of this research project, each participant shared the story of their native home and the refugee camps that they fled to. Their narratives were filled with trauma and emotional stress they had experienced. Their lived experiences influenced their academic success and their resilience. Table 10 illustrates a summary of the case study participants' demographic information corroborated from the questionnaire, including name, age, country of origin, reason for immigrating to the United States, and graduating grade-point average.

Table 10

Summary of Participants Demographic Information

Name	Age	Country of Origin	Reason for Immigrating	GPA
Simon	20	Brazzaville, Congo, Africa	Safety	1.89
Shamarke	18	Eriteria, Africa	Political asylum	2.94
Samuel	18	Somalia, Africa	Safety	3.51
Tina	19	Poi pet, Cambodia	Safety	4.32

Simon. Simon was born in Brazzaville, Congo, in Africa on June 18, 1996. Simon's family consisted of his father, a carpenter who provided for his family, his mother, and five siblings. The military tried to recruit his father to fight in the Second Congo War by torturing him. They killed him because he refused to join. Weeks later, Simon's mother became too ill to remain in the family home. At that time, the family decided to seek protection from the United Nations (UN). They could no longer afford the medical care the mother so desperately needed. The journey to the UN took a toll on his mother because they had to walk 10 miles; when they arrived, she was placed in the Intensive Care Unit for three days. On the fourth day, at 2 a.m., Simon's mother called him and one of his older sisters, Marie, into the hospital room. She told them, "I have been sick for a long time, and I am just tired. I don't want to suffer anymore." She told his sister to take care of Simon, not to let him suffer or allow him to make bad decisions, and to make sure he becomes a man because he will eventually take care of them (his

sisters). Later that morning, she passed away. Simon was only 7 years old and Marie was 14.

After his mother's funeral, Simon and his five siblings went to the UNHCR Kambangu refugee camp in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in 2002. The refugee camp provided their necessities for six months. Unfortunately, education was not considered a necessity and, therefore, the family had to pay for school themselves. With five siblings under the age of 15 who had to go to school, the children would miss school since they could not afford the tuition for all five children.

By 2004, the family had to provide for themselves. After a couple of years, three of Simon's older sisters left the refugee camp in search of a better life; however, after leaving, the camp forbade the sisters to come back. This was a part of the camp's policy. A year after leaving the camp, one of Simon's sisters, a twin, died from illness at the age of 17. By 2005, the family had applied to enter the United States; the family received their approval in 2012. However, approval was only granted for the three siblings who remained in the refugee camp: Marie, Simon, and a younger sister. The people at the camp told Simon's family that the United States was like heaven: whatever you want, you can get; people never go hungry in the United States. Simon and his sisters were excited to leave the impoverished camp and start a new life in the land of opportunity. Their last week in Africa was stressful, especially after going through interviews, medical examinations, and an orientation. Saying goodbye to his sisters, friends, home, and country was difficult.

Once in the United States, Simon enrolled at Diversity High School in January 2013. He brought with him a wealth of knowledge from classes he had taken in Africa such as art, economics, geography, health, comparative government, English language development, French, and world history. Simon graduated from DHS December 2016 with a 1.89 grade-point average. Simon described academic success as high school graduates becoming productive citizens in society. He described a successful person as someone who could read, write, and could hold down a job. Simon particularly emphasized the importance of learning English. He noted:

If you do not speak English, you cannot go and get a job and have money. You still have to go to school and learn English and maybe get a great job. Most parents (of refugees) do not have good jobs because they do not speak English.

He indicated that his beliefs stem from his experiences in both the Congo and the United States.

Shamarke. Shamarke was born in Mendefera, Eritrea, Africa on January 1, 1998. His family consisted of his father, mother, three brothers, and four sisters. He came from a family of farmers. As Shamarke became older, it became increasingly dangerous for him remain in Eritrea because all of the males were required to complete national service, which meant beginning military service at the age of 18. Military service can last from a couple of years to a lifetime commitment. He described other factors that aided in his decision to leave, including no freedom of speech or written press, a dictatorship, and a communist government (by the Derg, a Marxist military). He stated that the government incarcerated anyone who criticized it.

In 2009, Shamarke's mother was six months pregnant when she became ill and had to go to the hospital in the capital city of Asmara. Unfortunately, they did not have sufficient medical resources to assist her, and the medical staff sent her home. Shamarke's father found another hospital; his mother stayed there for two months on bed rest. She delivered a baby girl, but she died from childbirth complications. Back home, Shamarke's two older friends, James and Peter, were already planning their departure from Eritrea. They were almost 18 years old and they did not want to enlist into the national military service. Friends finally convinced Shamarke to leave Eritrea, but the decision was the most difficult he ever had to make. He said, "[My family] had a really tough time in life; we couldn't support ourselves [and] sometimes we didn't even eat dinner because we didn't have enough food or have any money to support our family." Shamarke knew that, if he left, he would never be able to see his family again. His mother had just died; he also worried about his family's safety and not being able to help provide for them. Leaving Eritrea would provide him with access to a better education and freedom. However, if he stayed, he knew he would have to join the military and be forced to injure or kill others, which was against his values.

In 2010, Shamarke (age 12), James (age 14), and Peter (age 16) walked from Eritrea to the Ethiopian border. The journey took 28 hours and they were not prepared for the heat. They made it to a camp, where they were separated into different age groups. A couple of weeks later, Shamarke reunited with one of his younger brothers in the refugee camp. There were times when camp life was a struggle; it was difficult to stay

motivated without his whole family, but he drew inspiration from the Bible. After a couple years of being in the refugee camp, Shamarke earned his Deacon certificate.

By 2013, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and Lutheran Family Services came to the refugee camp and selected Shamarke and his brother to go to the United States. He had heard stories about America, such as it was like heaven and anything you ask for, you will receive. On December 17, 2013, he arrived to Small Springs (pseudonym), Colorado, in the Southwest and placed with a foster family. Shamarke came to Diversity High School August 2014 as a transfer student from Small Springs public school. Shamarke graduated in May 2017, four years after coming to the United States as a Newcomer with a GPA of 2.941.

Shamarke desired a better life for himself: “When I was [at the refugee camp], I didn’t give up. I was still hoping for a better life in the future.” Still, Shamarke encouraged himself to do something more with his life. He stated, “Be motivated [to be] whatever you want to be in the future. Your past story does not reflect who you are in the future.” He described academic success as a high school graduate who is college-ready.

Samuel. Samuel was born June 16, 1998, in Baardheere, Somalia, Africa. His family consisted of his mother, father, seven brothers, and two sisters. When Samuel was 7 years old, his mother and siblings were riding the bus home from school when a police officer approached the family and asked them to exit the bus. The police informed the family that three men had beaten their father. When they arrived to the hospital to see him, he was unresponsive. Days later, he died because the family could not afford the medical services needed to keep him alive. Samuel’s mother became depressed and could

no longer function in her day-to-day activities. The family moved to a refugee camp in Kenya.

The individual refugees living in the camp would wear a certain color T-shirt to identify and separate them from the native people of the town. The camp proved to be a dangerous place to live because of the robbing, raping, and killing. Samuel thought the town's people did these crimes to refugees. Refugees would report the crimes to the authorities, but the incidences would continue. Without their father's protection, Samuel's mother was robbed of her possessions as she was walking through the camp with some of her children. On another occasion, a group of men tried to rape Samuel's mother and forced the children to watch. One of Samuel's older brothers was killed by a gunshot to the head while he was walking through the refugee camp. He was only 15. These incidents took an emotional toll on Samuel and it became difficult to trust others and open up to people. In terms of his education, the Somali school in the refugee camp was neglectful; the teacher would not show up for weeks in a row. The students would just entertain themselves by playing games or singing, but they received little formal education.

When the family received its approval to enter the United States, only four children under the age of 18 under-age were allowed to come; the remaining four stayed behind. When the family first arrived to the U.S., they arrived in Chicago, but a family friend told them that Chicago was a dangerous place, so they ultimately moved to the Southwest. Samuel had not seen his four siblings since he left. During the summer of

2017, the African Community Project funded a trip for Samuel and his mother to return to Somalia to visit his family for the first time in 10 years.

Samuel enrolled in DHS August 2013 from a RMS district middle school. He graduated May 2017 with a GPA of 3.510. Samuel viewed academic success as graduating from high school. He was motivated to succeed through the awards that he received from school. His goal was to earn as many awards as he could, which he accomplished in elementary and middle school; however, it was difficult in high school, since the school only offered “Honor Roll or Attendance” awards.

Tina. Tina was born in Poipet, Cambodia, on October 20, 1997. In Cambodia, she lived with her father, mother, and brother, along with her maternal grandparents, aunt, and uncle. Her paternal family all died in the Cambodian Civil War in 1975. Her family lived in the capital, in the “ghetto,” as Tina described it. Tina’s father left Cambodia in 2003 because he did not agree with the government. The Cambodian government targeted him and began surveilling him. For the safety of his family, he fled to Thailand. Tina came home one day and realized her father was gone. Her mother told her if anyone at the school asked who her father is; she should reply that she does not have a father. Tina complied, but the other students taunted her, called her names, and physically attacked her because of her absent father. There was a hole in the ground on her way to and from school, and the other children pushed her in it; sometimes, she had to wait for half an hour for someone to come and help her out.

The bullying affected Tina emotionally and academically. She could not process the information she learned in class, which then increased the physical punishment she

received from her teachers. The punishments led her to skip school. She did not want to tell her mother what was happening because Tina thought she already had enough to worry about with her father's safety. However, Tina found comfort at home with her grandfather, who allowed her to stay home from school. Two years later, her father sent for the family to move to Thailand. Everyone in the household packed up to move to Thailand except her biggest supporter, her grandfather, who decided to stay.

Once in Thailand, the family had to remain in hiding because they were undocumented immigrants. Therefore, Tina did not attend a Thai school because her family risked deportation back to Cambodia. Her family eventually found a United Nations refugee camp in Tham Hin, Thailand. There, Tina attended a United Nations school, where they taught basic English skills. However, she did not escape the bullying. At the UN school, the others viewed Tina as "different" because she did not look Thainese, speak the language, or have their mannerisms. Tina had to adjust to another type of schooling, language, and culture. At the young age of seven, Tina had to learn to speak Thai so that she could help her parents with interactions requiring translation. Her parents worked long hours to save up money for their journey to the United States. Tina relied on her maternal aunt and uncle, but not in the same emotional capacity as she did her grandfather. A year after the family's arrival to Thailand, they received news that they could begin the process to go to the United States. The family had to go through interviews and, if selected, they could proceed to the orientation stage. Unfortunately, Tina's aunt and uncle did not make it past the first stage of the process. However, Tina's

immediate family made it past the orientation phase and boarded the plane to begin their new life in the United States.

Tina enrolled at DHS August 2013 from a RMS district middle school. She graduated DHS May 2017 with a GPA of 4.326. Tina viewed academic success as someone graduating high school and going to college. She wanted to make her parents proud after her struggles in the Cambodian and Thai schools. Tina also wanted to make her grandfather proud of her scholarly accomplishments.

The sections that follow delineate themes that emerged because of the analysis of the data. The first section details themes from the first research question: What factors support the academic resilience of Newcomers? The second section details themes from the second part of the research question: What factors constrain the academic resilience of Newcomers?

Factors that support the academic resilience of Newcomers

The following themes emerged from analysis of the data related to factors that support academic resilience of Newcomers: a supportive network, Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP), a sense of belonging, and motivation to graduate from high school.

A supportive network. According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, a supportive system is “a network of people who provide an individual with practical or emotional support” (Merriam-Webster’s collegiate dictionary, 1999). For this study, the researcher designated practical supports as aid for the participant’s basic needs from services provided by the government, including housing, monetary support, and

educational services. The researcher designated emotional support as support from organizations, including religious organizations and school.

Practical support. The participants received housing and monetary support along with educational support.

Housing and monetary support. Both Simon's and Samuel's family received government assistance through Section 8 housing. Section 8 housing is a government-funded program; the program assist low-income families based on the family's gross annual income. When they both arrived to the United States, they were placed in the same apartment complex that was designated for refugees. Samuel's family received continuous financial assistance because his mother could not provide for her four children because of her disability. Samuel noted the difference between how people in the U.S and Kenya take care of their people:

When we came to the United States, the government gave us a free house, paid the bills, and [provided] free food stamps. My mom... she is disabled, so she can't work, and they helped us. The government really saved us when we were settling in. In Kenya, they don't care about you, not like this.

After arriving in the United States and receiving monetary and housing assistance, the participants described that they thrived in a society where the government was concerned with their well-being. DHS provided practical support as well.

Educational services. School was another government institution that provided multiple forms of aid. It provided the participants with financial assistance with tuition-free education, free breakfast and lunch, and the English skills required to graduate from

high school. The participants' educational experiences in the United States were vastly different from that of their native country. In their native countries, their educational experiences included limited formal education, paying for their education, and going all day without proper nutrition.

Tuition-free education. Once they arrived in the United States, the participants indicated they were not absent from school because they were provided a free education. Simon recalls:

In Africa, school is not like here where students go to class...if you don't have money, they are going to kick you out of class; you have to leave no matter what. You see a lot of students outside because they do not have the money. If there is only two people that have money, then the rest of the class are outside.

Samuel said: "In Kenya, we wear uniforms and go to class, but the teacher would not show up. We would play games and play outside. In Kenya, if you don't have money, you cannot get a good education." Additionally, Shamarke mentioned that in Eritrea, his father had to pay tuition for his education. So did Tina's parents, but they had to pay the teacher on a daily basis.

The participants had educational gaps because their parents could not afford to pay tuition. Since Samuel and Tina came to the United States at a young age, their elementary education attempted to fill in their educational gaps. Simon and Shamarke had educational gap as young teenagers; however, they still graduated from high school.

Free breakfast and lunch. The school in the United States provided free breakfast and lunch to the participants. Receiving food from the school was uncommon in Africa and Cambodia. Simon said:

It was really tough; sometimes we would go without food for two days. You just go to school and you are hungry. We go home and there is no food, so you go to sleep; the next morning, there is still no food. Sometimes we would go to the forest and find a mango tree to eat.

Samuel compared the schools in Kenya with those in the United States:

We would be like what are we doing today. And they hardly feed us. Like when I came here (United States) and they gave us free lunch, I was like, ‘What! They are giving us free lunch.’ I went home and told my mom and she was like, ‘They are giving you free lunch; that is amazing.’

Schools in the refugee camps did not provide lunch for their students, and it was an expense the families could not afford. Two of the participants went hungry in the camps during school hours because the family could not afford to send them to school with food. The other two managed to get food from a local church or by exchanging work hours for food.

English Language Acquisition. Rocky Mountain School District provided several programs and initiatives that assisted the participants in learning English in a timely manner: The Newcomer Center, English Language Acquisition (ELA) program, and mainstream English (English only) classes. Simon said, “Without the Newcomer and ELA programs, I would be lost; I would probably not be graduating early. My English

would still be broken.” The Newcomer program was helpful to Simon; he stated that there were other students from the Congo. If one student understood the content, they explained it to each other. It also helped him to converse with other students in English.

Shamarke enrolled in the ELA program at DHS. He said he learned basic English skills. He excelled in learning English and exited the ELA program. He enrolled in advanced placement classes by his senior year in high school.

Samuel said English literacy was difficult for him during his placement in the ELA program in elementary school. However, once he learned the sounds of the alphabet, it became easier for him to learn the English language. After a couple of months, he was able to hold a simple conversation with his peers.

Newcomer Program. The Newcomer and ELA programs also contributed to the academic success of Simon, Shemarke, and Tina.

Simon said the Newcomer Center was a comfortable place for him:

Diversity is a good place because of the Newcomer Center; there is a lot of people from different places. The Newcomer Center is helpful because everyone is just learning English. And that is really good because they feel comfortable and have the confidence to speak to other students.

Said Shemarke:

The Newcomer Center is important that you can adapt to the English language. It does not help you right away because you need time to learn the language.

Newcomer Center is good to learn the basic English. Basically, it gives you the tools to help you in school.

Tina said she was in the Newcomer program at the elementary school she attended for a semester and remained in the ELA program for three years. When she completed it, she took honors classes in middle school and enrolled in mainstream classes at DHS. In addition to the district providing a supportive network, there were plenty of school personnel willing to assist students.

School personnel. The participants also received help from school personnel. Counselors guided the participants through their high school graduation requirements through grade and credit checks. The counselors met with the participants twice a year to review graduation requirements. DHS is the only school in the Rocky Mountain School District that employs a full-time psychologist and social worker to assist students. Nevertheless, the participants did not take advantage of the programs; however, they were aware of them. Several paraprofessionals at DHS spoke the same languages as the students, which enabled them to assist the students on their educational journeys.

There were also pre-collegiate programs housed at the school that aided the participants in navigating the different paths students could follow (e.g., college, vocational). For Simon, the most memorable assistance was the Goodwill ambassador, Mr. Johnson. DHS has a full-time Goodwill ambassador who mentors students and offers job placement, career coaches/mentors, and vocational programs. He helped Simon fill out his college applications and his Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FASFA) form. Mr. Johnson noticed that Simon was interested in welding; he researched out several programs until they both found one that suited Simon's needs. Simon graduated in December 2016 and began the welding program the following January.

Samuel was assisted by one of the pre-colligate mentors from TRIO. TRIO is a federal outreach and student services programs that aids students from disadvantage backgrounds. The programs are designated for low-income, first-generation college students, students with disabilities, and post-baccalaureate studies. Samuel said:

Eva, from TRIO, was telling me what she went through with her parents. They are immigrants so, basically, I related to her and she gives good advice. When I told her what was happening at home, she would tell me, 'That's ok.' And that I am going to get through it; she gives me good advice. Plus, she tells me things about college. I owe everything to her because, without her, I would not be interested in college. I didn't know colleges offered grants ... I never even knew that.

Ms. Chavez, a Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) advisor, checked in with Tina on a weekly bases to discuss her grades. GEAR UP is a grant program that increases the number of low-income students receiving postsecondary education. When she earned a B in one of her classes, Ms. Chavez spoke with Tina to see what Tina would do to improve the grade.

An athletic director assisted Simon. Mr. Smith, the athletic director who knew Simon from soccer, checked and conferenced with Simon about his weekly grades to ensure he was eligible to play. Mr. Smith encouraged Simon to try his best in all of his classes because he knew that soccer was important to Simon and wanted to make sure that he was on the field at every game.

An assistant principal assisted Shamarke. Shamarke struggled with how he was going to get to an interview to shadow a surgeon after school. By taking the bus, he

would have to miss his last class or arrive late to the interview. Ms. Garcia, the assistant principal, decided it would be best for Shamarke to attend all of his classes and she personally drove him to the interview. He said, “For her to look after me... she help[ed] me in any way to be successful. I cannot express my gratitude for what she has done.”

Emotional support. Each participant experienced difficult conditions in their native country; nevertheless, each one was able to find encouragement within their community.

Religious communities. Many of the participants found support in religious communities. When Simon’s family first arrived to the United States, a pastor and some members of the congregation went to his apartment complex to welcome them and to preach from the Bible. Simon ultimately decided to join the congregation and shared his experience during the interview: “[The congregation] were all willing to help with anything. I see that they really care about me.” Pastor Mark found Simon a job at a fast food restaurant with employees that either spoke French or came from the Congo. Simon became an independent young man, just like his mother wanted, because of Pastor Mark’s mentorship. He encouraged Simon to excel in school and he checked on him on a weekly basis to see if Simon lacked anything that he could provide him.

For Samuel, his mother made sure that he continued to be an active Muslim. He found a mosque where he prayed and learned more about Muslim traditions. At DHS, where he was involved in the Muslim Club, members helped each other memorize the Quran and discuss important Muslim traditions. For Samuel and his family, adhering to the pork-free diet was difficult when they first came to the United States because they

could not read the food labels. Eventually, the Muslim community aided the family with that issue. Samuel is grateful for the Muslim community that he connected with.

Ethnic communities. Others found emotional support in their own ethnic communities. Coming to America as an underage youth, Shamarke and his brother lived with a foster family in Small Springs. The refugee organizations responsible for family placements made sure that the brothers' placement with the family was compatible and could meet their needs. When Small Springs did not meet Shamarke's sense of community needs, the organization found him and his brother a foster family in Avendale. Avendale has a high population of Eritreans who could support Shamarke and fulfill his need for a sense of community. The Eritrean community not only offered encouragement in his studies, but it also encouraged Shamarke to ask for whatever he needed. However, Shamarke was too humble to ask for anything from the Eritrean community.

This section indicated how a supportive network is a factor that supports the student academic resilience; the next section will demonstrate how Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP) is another supportive factor for academic resilience.

Culturally Responsive Pedagogy. According to Hersi & Watkinson (2012), "Culturally Responsive teachers create supportive classroom climates and utilize instructional methods and curriculum that support the academic achievement of all students" (p.100). The sections that follow address components of CRP, including: caring, supportive climates, and valuing the students' culture.

Caring. Teachers who care attend to the needs of their students, and students view those actions as acts of caring (Hersi & Watkins, 2012). Teachers who attend to the needs of their students was evident to Tina. In the fourth grade, Ms. Carroll was driving home and noticed Tina walking home in flip-flops on a bitterly cold day; she stopped the car and took her home. Ms. Carroll helped Tina after school and on the weekends with her English pronunciation and tutoring. Tina went to Ms. Carroll for help because Tina decided that her English was not sufficiently fluent for her to proceed to the fifth grade. With the help of Ms. Carroll, Tina conversed with the principal about her concerns and Tina repeated the fourth grade. Following this decision, Tina was able to pass her ELA test by the sixth grade, which allowed her to take honors classes.

Supportive climate. Bondy et al. (2007) stated, “Ladson- Billings (1995) proposed that authentic, positive social relations in a classroom are defining characteristics of culturally relevant pedagogy in practice” (p. 327). Unlike the teachers from their native countries, the participants felt that the teachers in the United States supported them and wanted them to succeed.

Simon said, “All the teachers at DHS are so helpful; they are willing to help you when you need it. They always encourage me to do good, telling me to work hard and [that] everything will be OK.” Mr. Jackson, a social studies teacher, helped Simon with the tools he needed for the welding program in which he was accepted into. Simon said: “Last time, I needed help with welding. I had to buy an expensive tool, Mr. Jackson called one of his friends, and [they] found a way to get me a discount. They always show

me love and support.” Ms. Karim, Simon’s Newcomer teacher, inquired about his family and grades on a regular basis. Ms. Karim was always available for Simon.

Shamarke had several educators who influenced him at DHS. He said, “The teachers know the struggles we faced. They always give you a second chance, through tutoring. They always tried to give you some encouragement.” Mr. Clark, Shamarke’s advanced algebra teacher, explained math problems in a way that the students could understand. Shamarke said Mr. Clark always checked for understanding by asking questions, and noted, “He encouraged you to ask questions, even if you were afraid and if you did not want to talk during class. He encouraged you to come after school. I just like the way he interacted with the students.” Mr. Lewis, the chemistry teacher, took an interest in all his students; he encouraged Shamarke. Mr. Lewis greeted each student at the door with a firm handshake, eye contact, and the usual greeting, “Good morning, Mr./Miss,” or “Good afternoon, Mr./Miss.” He addressed the students by their last names. He also encouraged students to go through their thought process in their cooperative group to enhance community learning. Teachers at DHS taught students from many different parts of the world. Shamarke said:

They always try to remind you [of] how great you are and how to be successful, because it does not matter where you come from, it does not matter what happened in the past. You will always have the chance to be successful in school as long as you work hard. I feel like I could trust [the teachers]. They have so much faith in me. They would tell me, ‘You are doing such a good job with this homework.’ Every time I would do something they would tell me, ‘I knew you

could do it.' They would tell me, 'You do good in everything.' I would say, 'Thank you and I will try my best.'

For Samuel, his English teacher asked the students about their own perspective and not the perspective of the author when reading books. Samuel found this task rather difficult for second language learners because he would find it difficult to put meaning behind text. Samuel felt that the teacher valued his opinion and was interested in what he had to say. The teacher at DHS saw Samuel for who he is and what contributions he brought to the classroom by asking him his perspective.

Tina cited an example of a teacher who influenced her education. In the fourth grade, Ms. Gilmore, Tina's math teacher, encountered her struggling with a math problem. Ms. Gilmore asked the student teacher, Ms. Jones, to help Tina one-on-one in the hallway. Because of that extra help, math became Tina's strongest subject. She even passed the advanced placement class in calculus and physics her senior year.

Value Culture. Educators are exposed to the students' backgrounds when DHS acknowledges the students' culture in an academic setting by celebrating and honoring the cultures that make up the student body. Even though the participants did not mention how teachers valued their culture, it was apparent that the school as a whole valued the participants' culture. It is also important to note that a third of the educators participated in the Culture Fest as organizers for each part and some actually participated in the Culture Fest by singing and dancing. The participants also connected with other diverse students enrolled at DHS, which aided them through the school system. Simon especially enjoyed the various cultures on display at DHS. He said:

In school, there are different cultures that share different ideas. You could also find people from the same place as you. There was one guy from the same place as me and I feel safe because I could speak to him.

Shamarke was particularly fond of the DHS Cultural Fest, a celebration that occurred in the spring. The celebration had three sections to acknowledge the students' different cultures. First, there was the parade of flags, in which students dressed in their native clothes, carried their homeland flag, and walked across the stage with a map of their country projected on a screen as music from each country played in the background. Second, the Cultural Fest included a portion in which students sang, danced, read poetry, or played instruments from their native countries. During the last part of the Cultural Fest, students set up informational posters and displayed artifacts, candy, and native clothing. The mainstream students received a "passport" and visited each presentation to have their passports stamped. The first time Shamarke witnessed the Cultural Fest, he was overwhelmed: "When I see Culture Fest and when I see MY people dancing in front of me, I was so happy; I was excited...it is amazing. I do not know how they do [Culture Fest], but it is fantastic."

Samuel said, "The diversity is why I like coming here the most. And the fact that a lot of kids are dealing with the same issues that I am is really helpful."

The participants mentioned that they felt comfortable at DHS because of all of the cultures that were represented, they could find another person they could relate/connect with and did not feel isolated. Those connections allowed the students to build a supportive network to assist in their academic resilience.

Culturally responsive teachers demonstrated that they cared for the participants, created a supportive climate that encouraged the participants in their learning, and the participants' culture was valued. This created a safe environment for the students to thrive and support their academic resilience. In this section, students described CRP to be a factor that supports their academic resilience. In the section that follows, students described how having a sense of belonging supports their academic resilience.

Sense of Belonging. All of the participants felt a sense of belonging, due to their connections with their families and communities. According to Stebleton, Soria, & Huesman (2014), sense of belonging means, "...through which one is integrated into a community such that he or she feels needed and valued and contributes to the community in return" (p.9).

Family. The participants provided monetary support, childcare, and English interpretation for their families. Without the participants' support, their families would struggle. The participants felt a sense of belonging when they supported their families. Simons' goal was to get an education and apply to a job that pays above minimum wage so that he could help support his family in Africa. He said:

Well, when you look at all your past and things that your family went through, all those wars and things that your family went through, [it] makes you not want to live that life anymore; you want something different. By changing your life, there is nowhere else you have to be, you just have to go to school and be successful. Simon felt indebted to his sisters, who supported and encouraged him after his parents' and sister's death in the Congo. His mother's dying words echo in his ears; he graduated

with a high school diploma to support and encourage his sisters. He knows that any monetary support he can send to his sisters in the Congo will benefit them. He calls his sisters in the Congo often and they ask him for money to pay the rent, buy food, or cover medical expenses. He added, “You have to make sure you call them all the time...[to see] if they need help with rent and food, are sick, or don’t have anything. They just need money. I understand and I just send them money.”

Last year, Simon and his oldest sister, Marie, sent their income tax money to their sisters who remained in the Congo. With that money, they were able to buy land and, the following year, Simon and Marie planned to send their income tax money again so that their sisters could build two house on the land. For Simon, helping his sisters gives him a sense of responsibility to learn as much as he can from school so that he will be able to get a good-paying job. He wants to be the man that his mother wanted him to become. Simon contributes to his family’s household income, which he feels he is becoming a responsible young man, as his mother wanted him to become.

Samuel helped his mother with his niece and nephew. He dropped them off and picked them up from school; he also helped them with their schoolwork. Samuel interpreted for his mother when she went to her medical appointments. He would do anything for his mother. Helping his mother has been his way of thanking her for all the sacrifices she endured to get the family to the United States.

For Simon, supporting his sisters in the Congo is a responsibility that he is willing to endure based on his interview. For Samuel since he does not work, babysitting his niece and nephew is a way he contributes to his family.

Community. Shamarke and Simon felt a sense of belonging in their congregation. An Eritrean church welcomed Shamarke as the new deacon; during the interview, he described this experience:

The church had the biggest need for me [so] I am a deacon. I always serve there; I go to church every Sunday as a deacon...I have a job to do, [so] that is why I moved from Small Springs. I get up at three o' clock in the morning to prepare.

The church is what made me stay independent and motivated me not to give up in the camp. You always learn from the Bible. You will always see the same people and the same story in the Old Testament and how they overcome adversity.

Shamarke feels humble that the church needed him. He is not paid for his services at the church; he did not accept any monetary donations, even when offered. Shamarke said becoming a deacon was one of his callings in life. He has continued as a deacon since he was a junior in high school and will continue to do this service in college. Having a sense of belonging empowered the participants; however, motivation is another factor that influence their academic success.

Motivation. According to Nevid (2013), motivation is “factors that activate, direct, and sustain goal-directed behavior.” There are two types of motivation: internal (from within) and external (from the outside). Comments in the questionnaires and interviews corroborate this point.

Internal. Simon's sole motivation for academic success was his self-confidence: “I always believed in myself, no matter what.” He has confidence that he will achieve a better life because of the education he received. His education in the Congo and at DHS

gave him the necessary skills to be a productive citizen. His family also supported him in his academic career; Simon was the first in his family to graduate from high school.

Shamarke wrote an essay about his refugee experiences for The Refugee U.S. Consultation in Washington, D.C.

I was fortunate that I was selected to advocate for refugees at Washington, D.C., along with other delegates and other people from different states. When I went there, I saw different people who had different interest and stories. When I went there [Washington, D.C], I learned that I was not the only person with a painful story and I witness the motivation that people had to change their future. Your past story does not reflect who you will become in the future.

Samuel said:

When I see students that do not want to do the work, I am like, bro there are so many kids in different countries that would die to be in this class and learn what you are learning. Like take this class seriously. In addition, like there are kids on social media that say they hate this teacher. I am like that is so unnecessary.

The participants were motivated to excel academically by their experience.

Simon's experience of his poor living conditions in the Congo motivated him to excel in all parts of life. Shamarke used his refugee experience to motivate him to excel, but he did not let it define him. Samuel leaned on his educational experience from the refugee camp. He was grateful for the education he received but was upset that his mainstream peers did not take advantage of the education they were receiving.

External. The participants received motivation from their families' encouragement. The participants were grateful that their parents sacrificed so much so that they could have a better life. Simon primarily received his motivation to succeed academically from his family. He lived with his older sister Marie and her family; she encouraged Simon to do his best. When he came home from a long day of school and work, she would have dinner waiting for him and encouraged him to do his homework. She woke him up in the morning from the five hours of sleep he received most nights and made sure that he arrived at time to school. Although he was exhausted, she encouraged him to make it to school. Sometimes, he only wanted five more minutes of sleep, but she knew how important it was for Simon to receive his education. He said, "There were times when I [was] not motivated to go to school, but [Marie] tells me I have to go. That was something I appreciated that she did for me."

Shamarke received encouragement and motivation from his family and said, "Their concern was to be an educated person because they did not have the opportunity to do that, but me, I had the opportunity to pursue my dreams." His father was especially proud of him because he received a deacon certification in the refugee camp while living with seven other adolescents in a hut, whereas his father had to go a seminary, away from distraction, to earn his deacon certification. His father believed Shamarke's success resulted from his determination and focus; therefore, he continues to encourage and motivate Shamarke whenever his son calls. Shamarke's uncle was another source of encouragement. His uncle lived in the United States but resided in another state. Whenever Shamarke needed advice, his uncle was only a phone call away. The uncle

often explained how things worked by relating the issue to the Bible. Shamarke said, “Sometimes I felt hopeless, like something was happening. I just called him and he related everything to the Bible and he gave me evidence from the book.” His uncle came to the United States one year after Shamarke and his brother arrived.

Samuel’s individual motivation for academic success came from his mother, whom he wanted to make proud. Samuel mentioned his mother in most of the topics discussed. He said, “My motivation was my mom. She pushed us to make her proud, to finish high school, and go to college.” Samuels’ mom pushed her children by using herself as a motivational example, reminding them of how she overcame the adversities. Samuel said, “She always encouraged me to do better.”

Tina received her motivation to succeed academically from her grandfather. When her family lived in Cambodia, her grandfather raised her while her parents were at work and after her father fled. She wanted to prove the Cambodian schools were wrong by showing that she was an intelligent girl. She was not that “dumb” child, but a child who was in emotional distress and needed her father, which her grandfather understood. Tina’s parents also encouraged her by telling her to “Get all A’s.” Tina believed if she earned a high grade-point average and was accepted to college, she would make her parents proud of her, just as they were proud of her oldest brother.

All participants received external motivation from family members to excel academically. With both internal and external motivation, the participants were encouraged to do their best to live a better life or do their best. The analysis of data for this research project revealed that a supportive network, CRP, a sense of belonging, and

motivation helped support academic resilience of Newcomers. However, there are also factors that constrain the academic resilience of Newcomers.

Factors that constrain the academic resilience of Newcomers

This research study asked the question: What factors constrain the academic resilience of Newcomers? The following themes emerged from analyzing the data related to factors that constrained the academic resilience of Newcomers. These constraints include discordance with school policy, bullying, family separation, and acculturation.

Discordance related to school policy. According to the Merriam Webster dictionary, discordance is defined as “lack of agreement or harmony” (Merriam-Webster’s collegiate dictionary, 1999). Some comments in the questionnaires and interviews indicated that participants lacked an understanding or agreement with school policy.

Discipline. The participants were taken aback by what they perceived as a lack of discipline in U.S. public schools. The schools that they attended in the refugee camps were strict compared with those in the United States. The participants were stunned and confused by the behavior that they witnessed. Disrespectful actions were not addressed; teachers and students carried on as if it was normal behavior. The participants witnessed fights and drug use in the school that went without consequence. Simon said:

In Africa, if you talked while the teacher was talking, or came late, the teacher would tell you to go outside. But you were not going to stand there; you were going to kneel on your knees or sometimes [the teachers] told you go home.

Shemarke said he was disrespectful with a teacher in front of his peers because he witnessed others doing it, nevertheless, he was remorseful for what he did because that was out of character. He wrote an apology letter to the teacher the next day.

Tina described an incident in the female bathroom at DHS where there were two young women engaging in drug use. She did not express her concern to an adult because she said the drug use happens all the time with a lack of consequences.

In the United States, they witnessed disruptive behavior in the classroom on a daily basis. The consequence in Africa and Cambodia was physical punishment for those minor disruptions. This brought on confusion; disrespectful behaviors in one country was normal in the United States.

Grades. The grading system was difficult for Simon to understand as well. In the Congo, there are no grading systems in place. Instead, if a student passed a test, they proceed to the next grade level. In addition, checking grades on the school learning management system (e.g., Blackboard, Canvas, Schoology, Moodle) was new to Simon. At DHS, grades were on a computer system that was difficult for Simon to maneuver. When Simon first enrolled in DHS, he signed up for soccer, but he did not understand the concept of eligibility or that the sport was connected to the school. Simon did not understand that his grades affect whether or not he played soccer. During the first two games, Simon was benched because of his grades and could not play. He said, “I did not understand that I could not play soccer if I had an F in a class. You know, in the Congo, we just played soccer all the time; we did not have to show our grades to play.” However, sports motivated Simon to maintain a sufficient GPA for eligibility, which was evident

his senior year. Simon earned a GPA of 2.39; since he was no longer in sports, he used his time to work more hours.

Technology. DHS was a 1:1 school; this means every student received a tablet loaded with their textbooks and Google apps. The tablet contained school apps from which students could access their grades at any time. However, it was difficult for Simon and Shamarke to familiarize themselves with the tablet, check their grades, and submit their assignments electronically. They were frustrated at receiving zeros because they would not submit their work on time. They would have preferred that each teacher go through the process at the beginning of the school year for a few weeks to help students become familiar with the tablet.

Access testing. All of the participants took the WIDA test and the state assessment. Simon did not understand why he had to take the ACCESS WIDA test on the first day of school:

When I came here in 2014, there was a day where we had to come in for [WIDA] testing. I did not speak English and now I have to take a test. I was shocked because I did not understand English. I just sat there with a pencil and did not fill out anything. I felt so bad and stupid. It was so hard; my sister and I just sat there because we did not understand anything.

Experiencing these types of emotions on the first day of school, Simon did not know if he was going to make it all four years. Shamarke would have liked the school to explain the ACCESS test to the students more clearly; he believed that students use it as a safety net

to remain in the ELA program for an extended period. Like the WIDA assessment, the state assessments constrained the Newcomers.

High stakes assessment. Assessing Newcomers on a high-stakes test during the first year of their arrival does not give the student enough time to learn English (Nichols & Valenzuela, 2013). In the Newcomer program, students learn entering language that consists of everyday social and instructional words and expressions. All of the participants took the Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS) state assessment their first year of arrival. CMAS assesses students in mathematics, science, English, and social studies from third grade to 11th grade. Administration of the high-stakes assessments happens between March and April. The measurement tool compares scores of the individual with their peers in the district, state, and country.

Shamarke took the state assessment his first year with limited knowledge of the English language. He said:

I took the state assessment in Small Springs; it was my freshmen year. I did not like it. How did they expect for me to read three passages and answer questions? At that moment, I was a new person to the country. I did not know what to do. I did not do anything basically. I sat down and read what I could. I looked at it and I did not do anything. What could I do? The state assessment was weird.

The state assessment was a challenge for Samuel as a recent Newcomer, too. He said:

I remember, in elementary school, when I got the U's [unsatisfactory] and the kids were talking about [how] I got proficient. I got proficient and I was like, 'Oh, I feel they are stupid and dumb that sucks for me.'

In high school, Samuel took the state assessment test as a 10th grader after taking the test for seven years; he still has not changed his opinion of the tests.

When I took the state assessment in 10th grade, I was still getting U's. I was like, 'What am I doing wrong?' I know the state tests were hard, especially for the ELA kids...because the English, they use it [and] it's kind of like big words.

By Samuels' junior year, he took the pilot CMAS test in science. He was confident that he did better; however, the test results remain unknown since it was only a pilot year.

Tina said, "Well, when I started third grade in March, we all had to take the state assessment. I failed. The test results were all U's; I felt so dumb." When Tina was given the test, she had the same reaction as Simon when he took the WIDA test: "It was like a paper full of English words that looked like blobs. You give Newcomers this test, they do not speak any English, and they do not understand, so of course they are going to fail." When Newcomers take the state assessment test when they are not mentally ready, it can affect how they view academics and how they view their future academic success.

(Nichols & Valenzuela, 2013; Tanner, 2013).

In sum, the participants were taken aback by the dissimilarities of the schools they attended in the refugee camp and the schools in the United States. The lack of discipline and the testing had a negative impact on the students. One also mentioned when they saw that students were disrespectful without consequence, they felt they could do the same.

The participants all agreed that taking the ACCESS English placement assessment on the first day caused a lot of stress because in their countries, the students took tests after they finished a unit and not on the first day. As for the state assessment, all the participants took it the first year they arrived to America, and two of the four that saw their results, mentioned that were disappointed, and felt like a failure. In the next section, three of the four participants experienced bullying.

Bullying. According to the Merriam Webster dictionary, bullying is “abuse and mistreatment of someone vulnerable by someone stronger and more powerful” (Merriam-Webster’s collegiate dictionary, 1999). Three of the four participants perceived themselves as victims of bullying, which was corroborated on the questionnaires and interviews. Bullying occurred because the participants believed themselves as different from the host culture. They cited that the school did not do enough to protect them.

The participants viewed bullying as disrespectful because they were different from the host culture. Simon was bullied at DHS, while Simon and Tina were bullied in their elementary school. The incidents all happened during the first year that they were in school. Simon said:

In math class, this guy would tell me to get up [and] I would. When he would ask for my chair, I would give it to him. I knew if I do not show this guy the true me then he is going to take advantage of me. One day, I got there early and no one was in the class, I asked him why he was threatening me in my broken English. I told him he had a choice: stop, or we were going to fight. He approached me, so I beat him up. I did this to keep my dignity and respect.

Simon believes this incident is the reason he did not have friends at school; bullying made it difficult to focus on schoolwork. There is no time to concern himself with other people and there were no incidents on his behavioral record.

When Samuel was younger, students bullied him in elementary school because of his physical appearance. He said:

I used to get bullied because I had different teeth from other people. It was basically [that] the water system in Kenya is really bad. It is called Fluoride poisoning and your teeth get infected. I know I got bullied because of that, but I didn't care. My mom was like, 'Just ignore them; just do your schoolwork.' I guess when people say things about me, I just block them. It is kind of weird, I guess, [but] that is how my mom helped me a lot [to] block negative energy.

Tina believes the mainstream students took advantage of her lack of English language skills, culture, and mannerisms beginning when she started at the Newcomer Center and enrolled in the ELA program. Tina's believes that her third-grade teacher was not aware of what was happening. She said,

When I began speaking English, the kids were teaching me bad words. The kids would tell me to raise [my] hand and, when [I] raise [my] hand, to show the middle finger. I would say a bad word, but I did not know what it meant. Tina continued, I did it and [the teacher] screamed at me. I was so scared that I hid under the table.

In class, she only trusted students who spoke the same language as she did because of what the mainstream kids did to her. Bullying did set the participants back emotionally; they all came to the United States for a better life but experienced bullying.

Family Separation. Starr and Brilmayer (2003) defined family separation as “separation implemented against the expressed will of all the family members concerned” (214). There were two categories: permanent and temporary. Permanent are irreversible separations, which involve death, whereas temporary separations are not permanent and usually last for a period. The four participants endured at least one permanent and one temporary family separation.

Permanent separation. Three of the participants lost a parent. The experience of losing someone close to the participants saddened them. Simon’s father received a brutal beating when he refused to join the military in the Second Congo War and passed away from his injuries. His mother passed away weeks later, leaving five children in the care of his 17-year-old sister. One of his sisters died when she left the refugee camp in search of a better life. When Simon’s family received approval to come to the United States, two of his sisters remained in the Congo. These separations have been emotional and stressful; however, Simon uses those experiences as motivation. At the age of 19, Simon supported two of his sisters and their families. This has been extremely difficult but also rewarding for him.

Shamarke’s mother died during childbirth before he decided to leave Eritrea. Unfortunately, he did not see his younger sister, because she did not come home from the hospital when he left Eritrea. Shamarke knew that if he left Eritrea on political asylum, he

would never be able to return and see his family again. Shamarke wanted to send his father his graduation announcement and a senior picture, but he did not know if his father would receive it or if the government would intercept it and cause problems for his father.

Samuel's father died when he was only 5 years old. The death of his father affected the whole family, especially his mother. Samuel's mother suffered from depression for months, and his siblings depended on each other to move forward.

Tina and her grandfather separated. The first separation occurred when Tina's family left Cambodia for Thailand; her grandfather decided to stay in Cambodia, because that was his home. For Tina, it was a confusing time. On one hand, she reunited with her father, whom she had not seen in two years. On the other hand, she left the only person who supported her and understood what she experienced when her father left. In Thailand and the United States, Tina was not in communication with her grandfather, but she yearned to hear his advice and feel his touch. During her freshman year, her grandfather died.

These permanent family separations (deaths in the families) affected the participants differently. For Simon and Samuel, the deaths happened when they were younger than 7 years old. Tina's separation also happened when she was young; however, she was not in contact with her grandfather after she left. All three participants depended on other family members to support them physically and mentally. However, during the interview, they were emotional when they told their story. For Shamarke, his situation is unique to the other three participants. His mother passed away right before he felt Eritrea. The rest of his family members are alive, but he cannot see his family based

on immigration status of political asylum. He can never go back to visit his family in Eritrea. Shamarke is conflicted with the decision to send his father his graduation announcement, a copy of his diploma, and graduation picture; he does not want to bring attention to himself or his family if the Eritrean government confiscates the mail. He wants to share his success with his father but he is unsure how because of the repercussions.

Temporary separation. All four of the participants left family behind in their native countries. Shamarke and his brother separated in the United States. One of Shamarke's younger brothers fled Eritrea a couple of weeks after he did and they reunited at the refugee camp. When they arrived in the United States, they both arrived to a foster family in Small Springs. However, Small Springs did not have the community Shamarke had hoped to find, so both brothers moved to Avendale. Avendale was a perfect fit for Shamarke, but not his brother, who decided it was best for him to go back to the foster family in Small Springs.

When Samuel's family received approval to enter the U.S., only four of the underage children accompanied their mother, while the older siblings remained in Kenya. It has been eleven years since he last saw his siblings. Some of his siblings remained in the dangerous refugee camp. His mother tries to call them as often as she can, but it always leaves her heartbroken, which affects Samuel and his siblings as well.

Tina's separation from her father was an emotional obstacle that affected her education; she said she had a difficult time concentrating during his absences. The

Cambodian teachers physically punished her for asking, answering, and not answering questions, which only increased in her father's absence.

The temporary separations also affected the participants in a unique way. During the transition (from Small Springs to Avendale and back to Small Springs for his brother) period, Shamarke's GPA declined from a 3.524 to a 2.430. When Shamarke was 18, he had to find his own ride to go and visit his brother in Small Springs, which was 90 minutes from Avendale. Without a job, it has become difficult for him to pay the \$40 round trip bus fare; therefore, he still does not see his brother as often as he wants. Samuel's family is still in contact through the phone with his brothers and sister in Somalia, however, when the conversation ends, the family (his mom and siblings who are in the U.S) remains emotionally drained, and it becomes difficult for Samuel to concentrate on his academic work. Tina's separation happened before she arrived to the U.S., but her father leaving affected her education in Cambodia, Thailand, and the United States because of the effect it had on Tina emotionally.

Acculturation. According to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, acculturation is "applied to the process of change in beliefs or traditional practices that occurs when the cultural system of one group displaces that of another" (Merriam-Webster's collegiate dictionary, 1999). The participants mentioned that they had a difficult time acculturating in to the U.S. culture and they strongly identified with their own culture.

Misconceptions of the U.S. Simon and Shamarke came to the United States four years prior to the interview. In the refugee camp, people stated that the United States was a place of excess and they can get whatever their heart desired.

Simon said:

People in the refugee camp told me that in the United States you don't go hungry, everything is good, and they give you all these things. They said the United States is like heaven and I could have a lot of things. It was crazy to hear all these things in the Congo. But things are so different right now.

Shamarke recollects an argument he had with his first foster family in Small Springs. He wanted a smart phone, but they would only give him a flip phone. Shamarke did not understand that a person has to work for the items and that they are not just given to him, which he was told in the refugee camp. However, the foster family could not explain it to Shamarke in a way that he could understand.

American Dream. Simon said he did not feel as though he fits into American society because he mentioned the American dream was not attainable for immigrants. Simon gave an example of Americans spending \$200 on five people eating at a restaurant. He would have worked 20 hours to earn \$200 to spend it on two hours of enjoyment with friends; he would rather send his money to his sisters in Africa than fulfilling the American Dream. Simon eventually wants to return to Africa to open up a welding business; that is why he does not feel like he connects to the U.S. Simon said a few of his peers became homeless because their parents asked them to leave the house at 18 years old. Simon said that would not happen in the African culture.

Native culture. Shamarke moved away from his first foster family and brother to a different city because he wanted to surround himself in the Eritrean community and

culture. When he found the Eritrean community, he was able to become a deacon at an Eritrean Orthodox church.

Samuel's mother wanted her children to embrace their Somalian culture. During school, he speaks English, but at home, he speaks and prays in Somali. Samuel would rather not adapt to the American culture because he feels his Somali peers who have become "Americanized" are more interested in gangs, ditching class, or dropping out of school. He does not understand why these students do not consider the sacrifices their parents made to come to the United States.

Samuel still wears his native clothing, a macawis, which looks like a skirt. One of the biggest challenges has been to find food to accommodate his religious customs. According to Samuel, his relatives think voicing his opinion freely is a trait he has acquired while living in the United States. With the current political climate, he has become even more vocal, although his mother tells him that he does not need to be that way. Samuel also noticed that he is losing his Somali dialect.

Tina said, "My parents and grandpa told me 'remember who you are.' I did become Americanized, and in some part I did keep my culture and know where I came from." Tina witnessed, like Samuel, that peers who became "Americanized" made bad choices and had low GPAs. She bears in mind the sacrifices that her parents made to bring her to the United States for a better life. Therefore, she continues to identify with her own culture.

In sum, Simon and Shamarke had a difficult time adjusting because of the information they received in the refugee camps. Simon realizing early that he would

rather send his money to sisters because it would last and provide more instead of him spending it to attain the American Dream. Shamarke connected with the Eritrean community because he understood and connected with them easily. Samuel and Tina perceived their American peers as a negative influence. To honor their parents' sacrifice, they both decided to identify with their own culture over the American culture.

Summary

This chapter opened with a brief introduction of each participant. This allowed the participants to share the adversities they overcame and the challenges they experienced in the United States. Each of their stories is unique to their experiences and perspectives. Each participant came from difficult situations; they all sought to live a normal life without fear. The first research question asked: What factors support the academic resilience of Newcomers? The participants needed a supportive network, Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP), a sense of belonging, and motivation.

The participants also shared factors that constrained their academic success. The research question was: What factors constrain the academic resilience of Newcomers? The participants stated the constraints were discordance of school policy, bullying, family separation, and acculturation. These constraining factors affected the participants in negative ways, however, the participants were able to overcome them because the supportive factors became protective factors.

CHAPTER FIVE DISCUSSION

Introduction

The purpose of this research project is to describe the academic resilience of Newcomers in an urban high school in the Southwest. The main research question guiding this study is: What factors support or constrain the academic resilience of Newcomers? Academic resilience is defined by Martin & Marsh (2009) as “the heightened likelihood of success in school and other life accomplishments despite environmental adversities brought about by early traits, condition and experiences (Wang, Haertal, & Walberg, 1994, p. 46).” The following themes emerged from analysis of the data related to factors that support academic resilience of Newcomers: a supportive network, Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP), a sense of belonging, and motivation to graduate from high school. The following themes emerged from analyzing the data related to factors that constrained the academic resilience of Newcomers: discordance with school policy, bullying, family separation, and acculturation.

This chapter focuses on the researchers’ interpretation of the findings from the study. The interpretations originated from the analysis of data from demographic questionnaires, three focus group participant interviews, four case study participant interviews, and documents collected that related to the participants’ academic progress and lived experiences. This chapter addresses implications for schools and organizations

that work with Newcomers. This chapter has four sections: importance of research, summary of findings, recommendations for schools, and conclusion.

Significance of the Research

There is a limited amount of qualitative research on Newcomer students (Carlson et al., 2012; Hagelskamp, et al., 2010; Martin & Marsh, 2009; Roxas & Roy, 2012). The researcher conducted a systematic search through the search engine Proquest; 85 articles emerged using the key phrase: high school newcomer academic resilience. These articles addressed issues such as trauma (Bennett, 2009; Carlson et al., 2012; Gindling & Poggio, 2012; Olweus, 2001; Roxas & Roy, 2012; Stermac et al., 2010), culture shock (Bang, 2011; Coelho, 1994; Good et al., 2010; Merali, 2005; Roche et al., 2011; Suarez-Orozco et al., 2010; Titzmann et al., 2008), relationship and advocacy (Bondy et al., 2007; Carlson et al., 2012; Hersi & Watkinson, 2012; Smokowski et al., 2014), and sense of belonging (Pransky & Bailey, 2003; Titzmann et al., 2014; Wasonga et al., 2003).

This research project enabled four Newcomers to tell their story. During the interviews, the participants retold the state of their native home country before they fled to the refugee camp, their experience at the refugee camp, the process of obtaining refugee status, the journey of arriving to the United States, and their educational experiences. Their stories shed light on the adversities they faced as young children and then young adults, and how they maintained resilience in the face of adversity. This study empowered the participants to share their perspective so that readers can grapple with the realities of the participants' lives through their own words. The participants' voice and

experience hold value in society, communities, and schools. The participants provided insight into their life experiences.

Summary of Important Findings

The researcher examined academic resilience in relation to Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Theory of Human Development. It includes four nested systems, which include macrosystem, exosystem, mesosystem, and the microsystem. The sections that follow address the findings in relation to each of the systems and the important findings.

Macrosystem

The macrosystem focuses on the interactions between the families of the Newcomers and society. This system includes economic aid and welfare provided by government agencies to the participants.

Contributing factor for academic resilience. According to the Migration Policy Institute (2016), newly arrived refugees qualify for welfare benefits, food assistance, and public health insurance upon arrival. When the case study participants arrived to the United States, the U.S. government or foster care helped provided them with assistance. Government agencies gave the families information and resources to make their transition to their new home smoother. Three of the four participants said the organizations in the United States took care of them. Simon and Samuel were living in Section 8 housing. Samuels' mother was receiving monetary assistance to help with food and utilities. Shamarke received assistance from foster care that met his emotional needs.

The participants found support through U.S. government agencies. The government organizations took care of their basic needs: shelter (Section 8 housing), food

(food stamps), and emotional needs (foster care). The implication to this section is that Newcomers benefitted from a supportive network to promote academic resilience. Having monetary and emotional assistance, the participants could thrive in their environment. The government assisted the participants in a positive way; however, school policy had negative effects.

Exosystem

The exosystem included school policies that influenced the students' academic resilience. The negative aspect that surfaced in the interviews was high-stakes testing.

Barriers to academic resilience. School policy on standardized assessments negatively affected the participants. When the participants first enrolled, they were required to take the WIDA ACCESS placement test. During the interviews, the participants mentioned they were taken aback because they had to take a test on the first day when they had not learned anything. Simon and Tina mentioned that when they first took the ACCESS test, they just saw blobs of letters on the page. The participants also took the high-stakes state assessment test the same year they arrived. Research by Cummins (1994) revealed that acquiring academic English takes five to seven years, while conversational English takes one to three years. Taking high-stakes tests before they are ready can challenge a Newcomer's learning and can ultimately lead them to disconnect from school (Nichols & Valenzuela, 2013). Samuel and Tina mentioned that they felt dumb and inferior to their classmates when they saw their unsatisfactory results from the state assessment on their transcripts. This set back the participants emotionally; this adversity gave the Newcomers one more thing to overcome.

In sum, the testing had a negative effect on the participants because they were not ready in their English acquisition. Samuel and Tina mentioned when they saw their results it made them believe they were not smart enough. However, the mesosystem had an altering influence on the Newcomers both positive and negative.

Mesosystem

The mesosystem focuses on the interactions occurring between two or more microsystems. The contributing factors that surfaced in the interviews were the school policy related to tuition-free education, free breakfast and lunch, and the English acquisition programs. The barriers that surfaced were the school policy related to discipline and technology.

Contributing factors for academic resilience. Newcomers can excel academically if they adapt to the school cultural and use the English language (Colbert, 2003; Locke, 2003; Merali, 2005). The participants stated they benefitted with policies related to tuition-free education, the free breakfast and lunch program, and the English acquisition programs. The participants expressed that they struggled with policies related to discipline and technology.

Tuition-free education. All the participants said the schools in their native countries collected tuition daily or weekly. When the families struggled financially, the students did not attend school, resulting in the participants having limited formal education. However, in the United States, the participants enrolled in tuition-free public schools. The Newcomers benefitted from the tuition-free public schools because they

were able to make up the educational gaps they had from not attending school in their native countries.

Free breakfast and lunch. Another advantage was the free breakfast and lunch program; all four participants mentioned that they did not have access to proper nutrition during school hours, and some struggled to obtain food at home as well. Simon recalled not eating for two days in the Congo and having to climb trees in the jungle to get food. The refugee camp would provide Shamarke with food within an allotted time; however, he would miss the lunchtime due to church or school. Simon would eat breakfast and dinner, since the school did not provide lunch for him. Tina as a young child would bus tables at a small restaurant in exchange for food. When the participants enrolled in U.S. public school, they received two free meals, breakfast and lunch.

English acquisition. The English acquisition programs benefitted the participants. When the participants first enrolled in school, the students took an English placement test, which resulted in the students enrolling into the Newcomer Center. Newcomer Centers address the literacy needs of English Language Learners, create a welcoming environment for students with limited schooling experiences, close the academic gap, and promote educational success (Boyson & Short, 2000). They also serve as a social function by helping Newcomers adjust to the American education system and social environment, and allowing them to feel emotionally safe (Friedlander, 1991). The participants learned basic English skills and were introduced to the DHS school system and culture. Once the participants exited the Newcomer Center, they entered into the English Language Acquisition program. English Language Acquisition is a structured

English immersion program that emphasizes developing the students' literacy solely in English (Zelasko & Antunez, 2000). All the participants mentioned that they benefitted from both programs by providing a strong English language foundation.

An implication to having these programs is for the all educators at the school to receive training with a linguistics component. Newcomers arrive with different levels of English fluency; this poses a challenge for teachers. Some Newcomers often lag behind the native-born speakers in academic achievements because they are learning English along with academic content simultaneously (Bang 2011). Newcomers benefit when educators understand that it takes three years to acquire a language socially and that it takes seven years to fluently acquire a second language (Cummins, 1994) and not use dehumanizing methods of castigation for explaining to their refugee peers in their native language (Reyes, 2008; Salazar, 2010). The Rocky Mountain School District trains its teachers in English language acquisition; however, the strategies that are geared toward primarily school-age students leaving the secondary school teachers to devise their own strategies. Students will improve in their language fluency when educators use specific discourse strategies to incorporate English (content) with their linguistic and cultural backgrounds (Reyes, 2008). Other supports that can assist a Newcomer in their linguistic transition are tutoring, homework assistance, test modifications, and extended time (Suarez-Orozco et al., 2010). With the appropriate support, the students will not become frustrated or disengaged and will become academically resilient.

Barriers to academic resilience. The following school policies that became barriers for academic resilience were discipline and technology.

Discipline. All of the participants expressed that the schools they attended in their native countries were more structured and they knew the expectations. However, in the United States, the participants witnessed disrespectful behavior, fighting, and drug use with no consequence in the U.S. schools. The Newcomers had difficulty understanding the school's norms in comparison to their prior schooling. At DHS, Simon was involved in a fight. He stated that there were no consequences. Shamarke was disrespectful with his teacher and faced no consequences.

Technology. Another challenge was the technology; all four participants mentioned they did not have access to computers in the refugee camps, and they struggled to learn how to use them. Simon and Shamarke said they believed that adults saw them as lazy or disrespectful because they did not understand that they were unfamiliar with the technology. They did not know how to turn on or use the tablet or computer. When it was time for the class to use technology, they both just sat there unaware of what buttons to push. Both did not know how to check their grades using the available technology.

In sum, the participants had to adjust to the new school culture because of the policies that were in place. The participants were expecting the same structure that they witnessed in the refugee camp school at DHS; instead, they witnessed a lack of structure and discipline. Technology was new and unfamiliar. Newcomers had no control over the school policies, but discipline and technology affected the Newcomers in negative ways. Nevertheless, the Newcomers were able to maintain resilience in the face of adversity.

Microsystem

The microsystem includes face-to-face interactions with the people the participants encountered. Those interactions included religious mentors, school personnel, teachers, and family and family obligations. Relationships between the participants and their community, school personnel, teachers, and family were vital to the participants' academic resilience. Nevertheless, trauma related to the death and separation of family members were factors that inhibited academic resilience.

Contributing factors for academic resilience. The face-to-face interactions that contributed to academic resilience are religious mentors, school personnel, teacher relationships, family relationships, and family obligations.

Religious mentors. Research shows that an increase of religious participation can serve as a protective factor for youth (Carlson et al., 2012; Smokowski et al., 2014). In the study, three participants had religious members who became their mentors. A pastor mentored Simon. Shamarke served as a deacon at an Eritrea Orthodox church; he received advice from the priest about his education. Samuel was involved with the Muslim community. The participants not only received support from community, but also from school personnel.

School personnel. Academic mentors that provide cultural capital play a crucial role in students' success (Morales, 2010). All participants said there were adults in the school setting who encouraged them through their academic career in high school. Simon had a Goodwill ambassador who assisted him with job placement and skills. Simon received assistance in finding a welding program. Shamarke had an assistant principal

who mentored him his senior year with an internships and the college process. Simon and Tina had pre-collegiate mentors who mentored both of them through high school.

Teacher relationships. The student-teacher relationships contributed to the students' academic resilience. The participants benefitted from culturally responsive teachers. Teachers validate that they care concern themselves with the student's needs, motivations, and perceptions (Hersi & Watkinson, 2012). Simon recalled a teacher who inquired about him and his family demonstrated that she cared about him, and validated him as human being. Shemarke received encouragement and motivation from his teachers, encouraged him to do his best and attend tutoring, and conversed about future academic classes. Samuel had a teacher who was interested in what he had to offer to the class. Tina had the academic support from her teachers; they encouraged her to advocate for herself and take risks. Teachers have the ability to create a secure and caring learning environment, establish high expectations, and offer support with those high expectations (Hersi & Watkinson, 2012).

An important implication in the data contributing to the academic resilience among Newcomer students is the effort their teachers make toward understanding the cultural to build a relationship. Students need to feel like they can relate to the teacher in order to be successful. Schools interested in enhancing the academic achievement of Newcomers benefit from teachers becoming familiar with the diverse cultural background of the student population. When students build those relationships with teachers, their academic performance could improve because their learning becomes significant.

Family relationships. The participants had strong family relationships with their parents/guardians. Simon had a strong relationship with his sister Marie. Shamarke had a strong relationship with his brother in Small Springs. Samuel's relationship was with his mother. Tina had a strong relationship with her parents. The family members encouraged the participants to achieve their academic goals.

Family Obligations. Newcomers often have family obligations such as the responsibility of caring for young siblings, chores, and language brokering (Bang, 2011). Simon and Shamarke sent money to Africa to help their siblings. Samuel babysat his niece and nephew. Tina translated and negotiated deals for her father. Family obligations gave them a sense of responsibility and purpose. Simon sought out a career that he could pursue in the Congo to support his sister. Shamarke aspired to be in the medical profession to be able to practice in his country and be with his family.

Barriers to academic resilience. The participants also experienced trauma in the form of death and separation of a loved one. Research suggests that experiencing separation and death can have a negative impact on a child's academic success (Gindling & Poggio, 2012). Simon's parents died when he was 7 years old. Shamarke's mother died when he was 12. Samuel experienced his father's death at the tender age of 5. Tina's grandfather passed away when she was 14 years old. Each mourned the death of their loved ones in a different way. During the interviews, Samuel and Tina became emotional with grief. Simon's and Shamarke's religious beliefs helped them deal with their grief. Not only did the participants experience death, but family separation as well.

Parental separation. Parental separation can trigger emotional anguish and grief responses, since a child can infer the separation as a complete loss of parents' love and protection (Gindling & Poggio, 2012). Simon has two sisters that remained in the Congo. Shamarke's father and siblings stayed behind in Eritrea. Samuel's siblings remained in Kenya. Tina experienced this loss when her father left Cambodia; she was not able to process what was going on at school. When Tina and her immediate family migrated to the United States, her aunt and uncle stayed behind in Thailand and Cambodia.

In sum religious mentors, school personnel, teachers, and/or family members supported the participants. According to Wasonga et al. (2003) study students that had positive relationships with others developed self-motivation. The relationships gave the student encouragement to become academic resilient. The participants' obligations gave them responsibility and a sense of purpose. The motivation assisted the participants to develop their own resilience as individuals. The trauma of death and separation affected the participants in a negative way that inhibited academic resilience.

Individual motivation. The case study participants were motivated to overcome challenges. Simon's experience of his poor living conditions in the Congo motivated him to excel in all parts of life. Shamarke's motivation came from his refugee experience; this motivated him to excel. Samuel was motivated by his educational experience in the refugee camp; he was grateful for the education he received in the United States. Tina was motivated by her educational experiences in Cambodia and Thailand; this motivated her to prove those teachers wrong. The participants' self-motivation was an important factor in their academic resilience.

In sum, the participants experienced factors across the four ecological systems that affected their academic resilience. These environmental influences affect the resilience of Newcomers. The positive and encouraging environments assisted the participants become successful in school. The constricting factors inhibited academic resilience by adding more adversities that the participants had to overcome. All the participants experienced both positive and adverse outcomes because of their ecological environments; however, they maintained their resilience.

Recommendations for the School

This study demonstrates that Newcomers can be academically resilient with support across ecological systems, including family, the school, and culturally focused community organizations. Schools can improve their efforts to support this unique student population. First, provide emotional support for the Newcomers who have experienced traumatic events. Second, family and schools need to motivate Newcomers by supporting them in their academic endeavor. Third, school districts need to adjust the period during which they assess Newcomers. Fourth, schools need to improve the relationship between Newcomers' families and the school by explaining school policies in the families' native language.

Emotional Support

According to Stermac et al. (2010), there are ongoing psychiatric disorders such as posttraumatic stress, anxiety, and depression among refugees in the United States. It is important that schools have the emotional support for the Newcomers with traumatic experiences by having psychologists, social workers, and counselors available when they

need them to help the Newcomers overcome those traumatic experiences. Even though the participants did not take advantage of the services at DHS, they were aware of the mental health services available to them.

Motivational Support

For Newcomers, it is important to have the support of their community and family as motivation to succeed. According to Suarez-Orozco et al (2010), Newcomers who have positive relationships with family, community, and school members perform better in school.

Family members encouraged the participants by either words or actions. Students who have collective assistance from their families have high academic resilience (Kapikiran, 2012). Simon's sister would wake him up for school after he had only five hours of sleep, or saved him dinner when he would come home from work at midnight. Shamarke received verbal motivation from his father, uncle, and foster mother. Simon accepted the motivation from his mother and siblings. Tina remembered her grandfather encouraging her to do her best. It is important for family to motivate their children as much as they can. Schools and families can share with each other how they are motivating the student, in order to assist the student better.

Community members, in particular religious leaders, mentored three of the four participants. According to Smokowski & Evans (2014), Newcomers who were actively participating in religious activities had high self-esteem. Simon's pastor found him employment at the local restaurants that employed people from the Congo or who spoke French to aid him in his job skills. The pastor supported Simon emotionally as he was

adjusting to the United States. Shamarke enrolled in DHS based on his priest's recommendation. Samuel reconnected with his Muslim traditions, which led him to correct his disruptive behavior. The participants mentioned how important it was that the religious leaders assisted them in the transition. Schools and religious leaders should communicate with each other on how to best support the students.

School members motivated the participants to be academically successful. Morales (2010) revealed that teacher mentors play a vital role in the academic success of urban students. Teachers who care about their students set high expectations and offer assistance to accomplish those high expectations (Hersi & Watkinson, 2012) give Newcomers the motivation to be successful. Each participant had a teacher and school personnel to motivate them. Simon had a teacher who would inquire about his family and progress in school. The athletic director assisted him with sports and eligibility; a Goodwill ambassador found his vocational program. Shamarke had an educator who would challenge his thinking in class and an assistant principal who drove him to his shadowing program. Simon's teacher was interested in what he brought in to the class. He also had a pre-collegiate mentor who would check his grades periodically. Tina was taught to self-advocate by her teacher and had a pre-collegiate mentor who would check her grades. The mentors provided the participants with support and encouragement. It is important that the schoolteachers and personnel motivate the participants because they know what the student is capable of academically and can encourage the student to excel. Newcomers know they can meet their potential with the support of their family and other adults such as religious figures, teachers, and school personnel.

Assessments

Many Newcomers complete high-stakes state assessments before they are proficient in English. Echevarria et al (2006) noted that it takes ELLs four or more years to become proficient in English because they are expected to learn English and content in their subject-related class. All the participants in the study took the high-stakes state assessment the first year they arrived. When they received their scores, they received an unsatisfactory rating that took an emotional toll on the participants. Two of the participants thought they were not smart enough when they compared their scores with those of their mainstream counterparts. Samuel took his first state assessment in third grade and remembered the affect it had on him because of the scores. As a senior reflecting back, he was disappointed that he was not able to bring up his assessment ratings. Tina had the same bitter memory of taking the state assessment. When the Newcomers take the state assessment, their scores are included in the school's Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), which lowers the school's overall score and could potentially risk the school being taking over by the state or even closing it (Christenson, 2003). It is imperative that districts allow the students to become proficient in English (exiting the ELA program) before taking the state assessment, so that students are confident with their scores. Taking high-stakes assessments when the student is proficient in English assist the school with its AYP as well.

School Policy and Family

Schools need to build strong relationships by informing families about the school culture and policies. Trumbull (2001) noted that schools and families differ in

communication styles and orientation to child development. Many Newcomer parents have not experienced positive school experiences because they were unacquainted with school policies and practices (Christenson, 2003). After arriving at a new school, Newcomers typically must learn a new language and school system, as well as different and sometimes confusing cultural norms and behaviors (Carlson et al., 2012; Nieto, 2000). It would be helpful for schools to provide a video or handbook to the families in their native languages so that the family can find answers to questions or if they are unsure of how the school functions. The video or handbook should have the basic information about the structure of the school and its schedule, materials, grading system, special activities, and events (e.g., back to school night, parent teacher conferences, and graduation). Ideally, parents and students should have access to the video or handbook on the school's website so that they can reference it at any time.

Future Research

This study examined factors that support or constrain the academic resilience of Newcomers. There are several areas for future research. First, researchers can compare and contrast the transitional experiences from the Newcomers' native home to the United States to explore the influence they have on their resilience. Doing an in-depth study will give a better understanding of what Newcomers go through before and during their transition. Secondly, researchers should explore different schools that do not have the Newcomer Centers or ELA programs in order to investigate how Newcomers progress through the system without those supports. Third, there is a need for research on students who aged out of the program or dropped out of school. This research would provide a

different perspective of how to better understand and support students and/or transition the students to a school that will fit their needs. Further research can benefit the Newcomers in their academic success and resilience.

Conclusion

This case study of four participants demonstrated the academic resilience in Newcomers. The data confirmed that the participants had similar life and school experiences. Consistent themes were evident following the data analysis. The findings of this study suggest that the protective factors from the family, school, teachers, and community that aid in the academic resilience of Newcomers are a supportive network, Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP), a sense of belonging, and motivation. The factors that constrain academic resilience of Newcomers are discordance with school policies, bullying, family separation, and acculturation. Each participant provided valuable insight on their experiences that will benefit future refugees, schools, and communities.

For Newcomers to experience resilience, they need to be exposed to positive social support networks (Wasonga et al., 2003). All of the participants were resilient because of their positive social support networks. With support, they demonstrated that they were able to achieve academic resilience. This support came in the form of CRP, a safe environment, having a sense of belonging, and external and internal motivation.

The participants also experienced constraining factors that could have affected their academic resilience. These included discordance with school policy, bullying, family separation, and acculturation. Despite these challenges, the participants were

successful; they graduated from DHS and on time. As Newman and Blackburn noted, “Resilient children are better equipped to resist stress and adversity, cope with change and uncertainty, and to recover faster and more completely from traumatic events or episodes” (p. 1).

Epilogue

Simon graduated in December 2016 and enrolled in a vocational program to earn his welding license. He plans to return to the Congo and open a welding business with several friends. Shamarke graduated in June 2017 and enrolled at a local university for pre-medicine. He wants to continue to be a deacon because his father and uncle are deacons in their local churches. Shamarke also hopes to become a surgeon and help people who are less fortunate. Shamarke would love to reunite with his father and siblings who remained in Eritrea, but he cannot go back because he received political asylum. Simon graduated in June 2017 and enrolled at a local university and plans to study sociology. He also hopes to become a refugee case manager who provides aid to those who arrive in the United States. Tina graduated in June 2017 and had planned to enroll at an out-of-state university for fashion. However, her parents need her financial support. Before she graduated, her mentors at the school advised her to attend the local community college to complete her prerequisites classes before transferring to the out-of-state college. Tina is attending community college part time.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Home Language Questionnaire

Home Language Questionnaire (HLQ)

In order to best support your student with the appropriate services, it is very important that you answer all questions accurately and to the best of your ability.

Once you have completed this packet, please submit it to a Denver Public Schools staff member.

Home Language Questionnaire	
Student's Full Legal Name: _____ <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"><i>Last</i><i>First</i><i>Middle</i></div>	
Current Grade: _____	Birthdate: _____/_____/_____ <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"><i>Month</i><i>Day</i><i>Year</i></div>
1) What is the <u>primary</u> language used in the home, regardless of the language spoken by the student?	
<input type="checkbox"/> English	<input type="checkbox"/> French
<input type="checkbox"/> Spanish	<input type="checkbox"/> Nepali
<input type="checkbox"/> Russian	<input type="checkbox"/> Karen, _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Chinese, Mandarin	<input type="checkbox"/> Tigrigna
<input type="checkbox"/> Somali	<input type="checkbox"/> Amharic
<input type="checkbox"/> Arabic	<input type="checkbox"/> Khmer
<input type="checkbox"/> Burmese	<input type="checkbox"/> Other - please specify: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Vietnamese	
2) What is the language <u>most often</u> spoken by the student?	
<input type="checkbox"/> English	<input type="checkbox"/> French
<input type="checkbox"/> Spanish	<input type="checkbox"/> Nepali
<input type="checkbox"/> Russian	<input type="checkbox"/> Karen, _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Chinese, Mandarin	<input type="checkbox"/> Tigrigna
<input type="checkbox"/> Somali	<input type="checkbox"/> Amharic
<input type="checkbox"/> Arabic	<input type="checkbox"/> Khmer
<input type="checkbox"/> Burmese	<input type="checkbox"/> Other - please specify: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Vietnamese	
3) What is the language that the student first acquired?	
<input type="checkbox"/> English	<input type="checkbox"/> French
<input type="checkbox"/> Spanish	<input type="checkbox"/> Nepali
<input type="checkbox"/> Russian	<input type="checkbox"/> Karen, _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Chinese, Mandarin	<input type="checkbox"/> Tigrigna
<input type="checkbox"/> Somali	<input type="checkbox"/> Amharic
<input type="checkbox"/> Arabic	<input type="checkbox"/> Khmer
<input type="checkbox"/> Burmese	<input type="checkbox"/> Other - please specify: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Vietnamese	
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"><div>★ _____ <i>Signature of Person Completing Form</i></div><div>_____/_____/_____ <i>Date</i></div></div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"><div>_____ <i>Relationship to Student</i></div><div></div></div>	

Appendix B: Parent Permission Form

PARENT PERMISSION FORM OPTION 1 & 2

Student Name: _____ Date of Birth: ____/____/____ Student ID Number: _____ Grade: _____

Parent(s) or Guardian(s):

The district offers classes for students whose first/home language is not English. After reviewing the information in the ELA Parent Brochure, and watching the ELA Video, choose one of the following options:

OPTION 1

I want my child to learn English while receiving some classes in Spanish. I understand my child will transition from instruction in Spanish to instruction in only English over time. My child will receive English Language Development until s/he no longer needs this help and is fluent in English.

☐ I select this option

OPTION 2

I want my child to learn English in English-speaking classes with teachers who are trained to provide my child extra support in learning English in reading, writing, math, science, and social studies.

☐ I select this option

***If Option 1 is not available at your child's school, you have the option for her/him to attend a different school to receive classes in Spanish. Please ask office staff which Zone School option you have.*

Please indicate which school personnel has provided you with an explanation of the options which are available and answered any questions you may have: (mark all applicable)

☐ Principal ☐ Secretary ☐ Counselor ☐ Other _____

Please indicate whether you have been provided the opportunity to read the ELA Parent Brochure AND view the ELA Parent Video.

☐ Yes ☐ No


I understand that if I want to make changes to my child's classes, I will complete a new Parent Permission Form.

Parent/Guardian Name (print): _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date ____/____/____

Appendix C: Sample Transcripts

13# ~~138444001~~
Appendix C


SISTEMA EDUCATIVO NACIONAL
REPORTE DE EVALUACIÓN
 3er GRADO DE EDUCACIÓN SECUNDARIA CICLO 2015-2016

DATOS DEL ALUMNO(A)
 CURP: XXXXXXXXXX PRIMER APELLIDO: XXXXXXXXXX SEGUNDO APELLIDO: XXXXXXXXXX NOMBRA(S): XXXXXXXXXX

DATOS DEL MAESTRO(A)
 MATRÍCULA: XXXXXXXXXX TURNO: XXXXXXXXXX GRUPO: XXXXXXXXXX CCT: XXXXXXXXXX

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI
ESPAÑOL III	7.8	8.9	9.6	9.2	10	9.3
SEGUNDA LENGUA: INGLÉS III	9	8.8	8.3	8.6	8.8	8.2
MATEMÁTICAS III	7.1	7.4	9.5	7.2	6.4	7.9
SEGUNDA LENGUA: INGLÉS II	8.9	9.4	9	8.9	6.7	8.9
TECNOLOGÍA III	7.7	9.2	6.9	8.6	8	8.4
HISTORIA II	7.9	8.9	7.6	6.7	6.3	7.4
FORMACIÓN CÍVICA Y ÉTICA II	8.3	10	10	8.5	8.2	9.0
EDUCACIÓN FÍSICA III	9.5	10	9	9.2	9.3	9.4
ARTES II (DISEÑO, DANZA Y VÍDEO)	8	8.5	6	6.9	8	7.0
PROMEDIO	2	8	13	14	4	

MARQUE SI EL APRENDIZAJE DE LA PROMOCIÓN DEL GRADO DEBE LA ALUMNO(A) SE ENCUENTRA EN RIESGO:
 ALERTA ☐ ALERTA ☐ ALERTA ☐

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI
ESPAÑOL III	-	-	-	-	-	-
SEGUNDA LENGUA: INGLÉS II	-	-	-	-	-	-
MATEMÁTICAS III	-	-	-	-	-	-
SEGUNDA LENGUA: INGLÉS I	-	-	-	-	-	-
TECNOLOGÍA III	-	-	-	-	-	-
HISTORIA II	-	-	-	-	-	-
FORMACIÓN CÍVICA Y ÉTICA I	-	-	-	-	-	-
EDUCACIÓN FÍSICA II	-	-	-	-	-	-
ARTES I (DISEÑO, DANZA Y VÍDEO)	-	-	-	-	-	-

TECNOLOGÍA II CLAVE: 2012
 ESPAÑOL: INFORMÁTICA
 ARTES II
 DISCIPLINAS VISUALES


Asistió: ☒ SI ☐ NO

El(a) maestro(a) registrará en el momento correspondiente, los avances de la Comprensión Lectora, relacionando el círculo que describe la situación de la(s) alumno(a). En otros casos de estas observaciones se brindará mayor información sobre este elemento de aprendizaje indispensable para el desempeño académico de los propios educandos. Estos aspectos no deberán condicionar por sí mismos la promoción de grado.

Los siguientes aspectos se relacionan con el desarrollo de la comprensión al leer y escribir, permitiendo informar si el alumno:

	Siempre	Casi siempre	En ocasiones	Requiere apoyo adicional
1.- Analiza el contenido de un texto para dar su opinión.	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2.- Sintetiza la información proporcionada por dos o más textos.	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3.- Utiliza la información contenida en uno o más textos para desarrollar argumentos.	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

EDUCACIÓN BÁSICA SECUNDARIA
 4to PERIODO ESCOLAR



TEPATILÁN DE MORELOS, JALISCO
 LUGAR DE EXPEDICIÓN
 2016 | 07 | 15
 FOLIO D1700403

ESTE REPORTE DE EVALUACIÓN ES VÁLIDO EN LOS ESTADOS UNIDOS MEXICANOS, NO REQUIERE TRÁMITES ADICIONALES DE LEGALIZACIÓN Y NO ES VÁLIDO SI PRESENTA BORRADURAS O ENMIENDAS. QUIEN CON DOLLO O FINES LUCRATIVOS REPRODUZCA TOTAL O PARCIALMENTE ESTE FORMATO INCURRIRÁ EN LAS SANCIONES DE LA LEY FEDERAL DE DERECHOS DE AUTOR.

Appendix D: Consent Forms

University of Denver Consent Form for Participation in Research

Title of Research Study: Academic Resilience in High School Newcomers

Researcher(s): Jacquelyn Carrillo, University of Denver, Morgridge College of Education

Study Site: Diversity High School

Purpose

You are being asked to participate in a research study. The purpose of this research is to understand how newly arrived immigrants fare in the United States school system by examining factors that contribute to or inhibit academic success.

Procedures

If you agree to be a part of the research study, you will be asked to participate in a focus group that entails a demographic questionnaire that will take 30 minutes to fill out and an hour interview with 6-8 other students. You may then be selected to participate in the case study that consists of three semi-formal interviews that will take 3 hours (1 hour per day) within a month of the fall semester.

Voluntary Participation

Participating in this research study is completely voluntary. Even if you decide to participate now, you may change your mind and stop at any time. You may choose not to answer any questions on the demographic questionnaire and discontinue with the interviews for any reason without penalty or other benefits to which you are entitled.

Risks or Discomforts

Potential risks and/or discomforts of participation may experience some discomfort related to your participation, even when the researchers are careful to avoid them. These discomforts may include the telling of your story (e.g. why the family decided to move to the United States, the journey to the United States, and factors that affect academic success). The researcher has informed the school psychologist, social worker, and counselor so that they are available to you if you are in need of their services at any time during the study.

Benefits

Possible benefits of participation is the opportunity to tell your story to someone who cares to listen and learn about your experience. Your story will be written and shared so that other educators will better understand the refugee experience.

Incentives to participate

You will receive lunch for the participation of the focus group (filling out and submitting a demographic questionnaire and interview) and \$50.00 gift card for the three semi-formal interviews for participating in the case study of this research project.

Confidentiality

The researcher will assign pseudonyms to all the data (demographic questionnaire, interviews, and any documents) that will be collected, your name will not be attached to any of the data. The data you provide will be scanned and stored on a password protected computer to keep your information safe throughout this study. Your individual identity will be kept private when information is presented or published about this study. The audio recordings will be used to capture your story for the researcher to extract common themes. The recordings will be kept until the original recording are transcribed, then the audio tapes will be destroyed.

Questions

If you have any questions about this project or your participation, please feel free to ask questions now or contact Jackie Carrillo at 720-423-4060 or/and at Jackie.carrillo@du.edu any time.

If you have any questions or concerns about your research participation or rights as a participant, you may contact the DU Human Research Protections Program by emailing IRBAdmin@du.edu or calling (303) 871-2121 to speak to someone other than the researchers.

Options for Participation

Please initial your choice for the options below:

___The researchers may audio/video record or photograph me during this study.

___The researchers may NOT audio/video record or photograph me during this study.

Please take all the time you need to read through this document and decide whether you would like to participate in this research study.

If you agree to participate in this research study, please sign below. You will be given a copy of this form for your records.

Participant Signature

Date

Appendix E: Rocky Mountain School District Consent Form

Invitation to participate in a research study

You are invited to participate in a research study about academic resilience in Newcomers. This form provides you and your family with information about the study. Jacquelyn Carrillo, a doctoral candidate at the University of Denver is the principal investigator and will describe this study to you. Please read the information below and ask questions before signing this form. You are being asked to be in this research study because you enrolled in the Newcomer Center.

Description of subject involvement

If you agree to be part of the research study, you will be asked to participate in a focus group along with other students that consist of an interview and answering questions on paper. If selected for further participation then three one-on-one semi-formal interviews will take place. The interviews will be audiotaped. This will take about 3 days (1hour per day) within the semester.

Confidentiality, Storage and future use of data

To keep your information safe, I will assign a pseudonym to all the data that will be collected and your name will not be attached to any of the data. The data you provide will be stored on a password protected computer. I will retain the data for one year after the study is completed. The data will not be made available to other research. The study will contain alias names for the participant, school, and school district. The voice recordings will be kept until they are transcribed, then the audio tapes will be destroyed. The results from the research may be shared at a meeting. The results from the research may be in published articles. Your individual identity will be kept private when information is presented or published.

Voluntary Nature of the Study

Participating in this study is completely voluntary. Even if you decide to participate now, you may change your mind and stop at any time. If you decide to withdraw early, the information or data you provided will be destroyed.

Possible risks

I have taken steps to minimize the risks of this study. Even so, you may still experience some discomfort related to your participation. These discomforts may include the retelling of your story (e.g. why the family decided to move to the United States, the journey to the United States, and factors that affect academic success). I have informed the school psychologist, social worker, and counselor so that they are available to you if you are in need of their services at any time during the study.

Possible benefits of the study

This study is designed for the researcher to understanding how newly arrived immigrants fare in the United States school system by examining factors that contribute to academic success and barriers that inhibit academic success. If you agree to take part in this study, you will have a chance to tell your story to someone who cares to listen and learn about your experience. Your story will be written and shared so that other educators will better understand the refugee experience.

Contact Information

If you have questions later, you may call Jacquelyn Carrillo at 720-423-6020. If the researcher cannot be reached, you may contact the Chair of the Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects, at 303-871-4015 or by emailing IRBChair@du.edu.

Agreement to be in this study

I have read this paper about the study or it was read to me. I understand the possible risks and benefits of this study. I know that being in this study is voluntary. I will get a copy of this consent form, when I return it.

☐ Yes, I agree to have my child participate
my child to participate

☐ No, I do not give consent for

Parent Name

Parent Signature

Date

Student Name

Student Signature

Date

Parents please be aware that under the Protection of Pupil Rights Act, you have the right to review a copy of the questions asked of or materials that will be used with your students. If you would like to do so, you should contact Jacquelyn Carrillo at (720) 423-6040 to obtain a copy of the questions or materials.

Appendix F: Focus Group Questionnaire

Number that was assigned to you: _____ Age: _____ Gender: _____

Nationality (where were you born): _____

What year did you come to the United States? _____

Why did your family decide to come to the United States? _____

Circle the people who live with you?

Parents Siblings Grandparents Aunt Uncle

Cousin Family friends

What languages do you speak? _____

What was the highest level of education for your parent/ guardian?

Dad: _____ Mom: _____

What was your parent/ guardian's occupation before arriving to the United States?

Dad: _____ Mom: _____

What is your parent/ guardian's occupation now?

Dad: _____ Mom: _____

Are you graduating in 2016? _____ Do you have a job? _____

What does it mean to you to be successful in school? _____

What colleges have you applied to? _____

What career(s) do you want to pursue? _____

Explain your previous school experiences such as number of years educated outside of the U.S.: _____

Write 3-5 factors that helped you succeed in school?

Write 3-5 factors that made it hard for you to succeed.

Appendix G: Transcripts

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Student Information			#870 Out of Country School							
			Course	Mark	Weight	Credit	Course	Mark	Weight	Credit
			2010-2011 Grade 09 Term 2				2013-2014 Grade 10 Term 2			
Diploma Type:	General Course of Study		04230 Algebra 1 S2	F	5.0000	0	04234 Algebra 1 Lab Block S2	C	5.0000	5
Diploma Date:	06/30/2017		01233 Bible as Literature	P		1.25	04234 Algebra 1 Lab Block S2	B+	5.0000	5
			03590 Chemistry S2	F	5.0000	0	03623 Earth Science S2	C+	5.0000	5
			02493 Comparative Government	P		1.25	31633 ELA-E Eng Language Dev R-2 S2	B	5.0000	5
			07419 CTE Life Mgt/Relationship S2	P		1.25	31673 ELA-E Eng Language Dev W-2 S2	C	5.0000	5
			05525 Drawing/Painting 1 S2	P		2.5	01449 High School Reading S2	C	5.0000	5
			21635 ELA-E Eng Language Dev R-1 S2	P		5	06254 Team/Life Activities 1 S2	A-	5.0000	5
			04652 French 1 S2	P		5	Credit: 36.000 GPA: 2.818 UW GPA: 2.818			
			02615 Geography S2	P		2.5	2014-2015 Grade 11 Term 1			
			06170 Lifetime Activities 1 S2	P		2.5	04225 Algebra 1 S1	D	5.0000	5
			05830 Music Sight and Sound S2	F	2.5000	0	03560 Biology S1	D	5.0000	5
			03695 Physics S2	P		5	05066 CTE MultiMedia S1	C+	5.0000	5
			02690 Psychology S2	P		2.5	04650 French 1 S1	A	5.0000	5
			02735 Sociology S2	F	2.5000	0	02610 Geography S1	C+	5.0000	5
			02755 World History S2	P		2.5	01356 Intro to Lit & Comp S1	D	5.0000	5
			Credit: 31.250 GPA: 0.000 UW GPA: 0.000				05870 Keyboard Skills 1 S1	B	5.0000	5
							Credit: 36.000 GPA: 2.084 UW GPA: 2.084			
							2014-2015 Grade 11 Term 2			
			2012-2013 Grade 09 Term 2				04230 Algebra 1 S2	C-	5.0000	5
			04234 Algebra 1 Lab Block S2	D	5.0000	5	03565 Biology S2	F	5.0000	0
			04234 Algebra 1 Lab Block S2	C	5.0000	5	05068 CTE MultiMedia S2	C+	5.0000	5
			31635 ELA-E Eng Language Dev R-1 S2	C+	5.0000	5	02575 Economics	C	5.0000	5
			31675 ELA-E Eng Language Dev W-1 S2	C-	5.0000	5	04652 French 1 S2	B+	5.0000	5
			06130 Fitness/End-Weight Train 1 S2	A-	5.0000	5	05775 Guitar Beginning S2	C	5.0000	5
			01449 High School Reading S2	D	5.0000	5	01357 Intro to Lit & Comp S2	D	5.0000	5
			03545 Life Science S2	C-	5.0000	5	Credit: 30.000 GPA: 1.761 UW GPA: 1.761			
			Credit: 36.000 GPA: 1.808 UW GPA: 1.808				2015-2016 Grade 12 Term 1			
			2013-2014 Grade 10 Term 1				04240 Algebra Advanced 2 S1	C	5.0000	5
			04233 Algebra 1 Lab Block S1	C	5.0000	5	01400 American Lit & Comp S1	C-	5.0000	5
			04233 Algebra 1 Lab Block S1	C	5.0000	5	04330 Geometry S1	C	5.0000	5
			03622 Earth Science S1	C+	5.0000	5	01446 High School Reading S1	C+	5.0000	5
			31636 ELA-E Eng Language Dev R-2 S1	C-	5.0000	5	06165 Lifetime Activities 1 S1	B	5.0000	5
			31676 ELA-E Eng Language Dev W-2 S1	C-	5.0000	5	02500 US History S1	C	5.0000	5
			01446 High School Reading S1	F	5.0000	0	03570 Zoology S1	C+	5.0000	5
			06250 Team/Life Activities 1 S1	B	5.0000	5	Credit: 36.000 GPA: 2.180 UW GPA: 2.180			
			Credit: 30.000 GPA: 1.810 UW GPA: 1.810				2015-2016 Grade 12 Term 2			
							04241 Algebra Advanced 2 S2	C+	5.0000	5
							01405 American Lit & Comp S2	B-	5.0000	5
							02485 Civics	B-	5.0000	5
							04331 Geometry S2	D	5.0000	5
							01449 High School Reading S2	B	5.0000	5
							02505 US History S2	B-	5.0000	5
							Credit: 30.000 GPA: 2.380 UW GPA: 2.380			

Student Information				Course				Course			
Diploma Type: General Course of Study Diploma Date: 06/02/2017				2014-2015 Grade 10 Term 2 03565 Biology S2 A- 5.0000 5 05530 Drawing/Painting 2 S2 B+ 5.0000 5 02575 Economics C+ 5.0000 5 04331 Geometry S2 C 5.0000 5 01356 Intro to Lit & Comp S1 B- 5.0000 5 01357 Intro to Lit & Comp S2 B 5.0000 5 02505 US History S2 B- 5.0000 5 Credit: 36.000 GPA: 2.810 UW GPA: 2.810				2016-2017 Grade 12 Term 2 07676 Advisement P 2.5 03611 AP Biology S2 C 5.0000 5 01849 CE-CCR 092 College Comp B 5.0000 5 04456 CE-MAT 055 Algebraic Literacy B+ 5.0000 5 02567 Holocaust and Human Behavior A 5.0000 5 03695 Physics S2 A- 5.0000 5 09201 Student Assistant S2 P 2.5 Credit: 30.000 GPA: 3.320 UW GPA: 3.320			
GPA Summary Cumulative GPA (Weighted) 2.976 Class Rank 164 of 377 Percentile 56.50% Cumulative GPA (Unweighted) 2.939 Class Rank 143 of 377 Percentile 62.07%				2015-2016 Grade 11 Term 1 07500 ACT/SAT Prep C- 5.0000 5 04225 Algebra 1 S1 A- 5.0000 5 04240 Algebra Advanced 2 S1 B 5.0000 5 01400 American Lit & Comp S1 C+ 5.0000 5 03585 Chemistry S1 B- 5.0000 5 06125 Fitness/End-Weight Train 1 S1 C+ 5.0000 5 04760 Spanish 1 S1 B 5.0000 5 Credit: 36.000 GPA: 2.887 UW GPA: 2.887				Standard Tests 2016 CMAA Geometry Score: 715 Date: 03/09/2015 Result: 2 ACT Score: 14 Date: 04/01/2016 ELA Date: 04/01/2016 English Score: 15 Date: 04/01/2016 Math Score: 14 Date: 04/01/2016 Reading Score: 11 Date: 04/01/2016 Science Score: 17 Date: 04/01/2016 STEM Date: 04/01/2016 ACT Score: 16 Date: 02/01/2016 ELA Date: 02/01/2016 English Score: 14 Date: 02/01/2016 Math Score: 14 Date: 02/01/2016 Reading Score: 17 Date: 02/01/2016 Science Score: 17 Date: 02/01/2016 STEM Date: 02/01/2016 ACT Score: 14 Date: 10/01/2016 ELA Date: 10/01/2016			
Enrollment Summary Start/End Date Grade School 08/18/2014-06/05/2015 07/01/2015-06/30/2016 07/01/2016-06/02/2017				2015-2016 Grade 11 Term 2 07500 ACT/SAT Prep A 5.0000 5 04241 Algebra Advanced 2 S2 B 5.0000 5 01405 American Lit & Comp S2 C 5.0000 5 05666 Beginning Percussion C+ 5.0000 5 03590 Chemistry S2 B 5.0000 5 06130 Fitness/End-Weight Train 1 S2 C- 5.0000 5 04762 Spanish 1 S2 B- 5.0000 5 Credit: 36.000 GPA: 2.887 UW GPA: 2.887							
2013-2014 Grade 09 Term 2 04230 Algebra 1 S2 B 10.0000 10 02485 Civics A- 10.0000 10 21635 ELA-E ELD R-1 (S2) A 10.0000 10 21675 ELA-E ELD W-1 (S2) A 10.0000 10 02615 Geography S2 B 10.0000 10 06170 Lifetime Activities 1 S2 B 10.0000 10 09923 Science A 10.0000 10 07702 Study Skills 2 P 5 Credit: 76.000 GPA: 3.624 UW GPA: 3.624				2015-2016 Grade 11 Term 3 09950 Pre-Collegiate Course Work B- 0.0000 10 Credit: 10.000 GPA: 0.0000 UW GPA: 0.0000							
2014-2015 Grade 10 Term 1 03560 Biology S1 B 5.0000 5 05520 Drawing/Painting 1 S1 B- 5.0000 5 31633 ELA-E ELD R-2 (S2) C+ 5.0000 5 31673 ELA-E ELD W-2 (S2) C- 5.0000 5 04330 Geometry S1 C 5.0000 5 06250 Team/Life Activities 1 S1 B- 5.0000 5 02500 US History S1 B- 5.0000 5 Credit: 36.000 GPA: 2.430 UW GPA: 2.430				2016-2017 Grade 12 Term 1 07676 Advisement P 2.5 03610 AP Biology S1 C- 5.0000 5 01250 College Prep Lit & Comp S1 B 5.0000 5 05000 CTE Accounting S1 B 5.0000 5 31680 ELD Seminar S1 C 5.0000 5 01837 MAT 055 PREP B 5.0000 5 03690 Physics S1 B 5.0000 5 02720 Social Problems A- 5.0000 5 Credit: 37.600 GPA: 2.863 UW GPA: 2.783							

* Courses with max GPA value > 4.0

Official's Signature _____

Student Information				Course				Course			
<div> <div></div> <div> Diploma Type: General Course of Study Diploma Date: 06/02/2017 </div> </div>				<div> <div></div> <div> 2014-2015 Grade 10 Term 1 01400 American Lit & Comp S1 A- 5.0000 5 06085 Beginning Dance S1 B+ 5.0000 5 03585 Chemistry S1 B- 5.0000 5 04330 Geometry S1 C- 5.0000 5 04760 Spanish 1 S1 A 5.0000 5 06250 Team/Life Activities 1 S1 A 5.0000 5 02500 US History S1 A 5.0000 5 Credit: 36.000 GPA: 3.334 UW GPA: 3.334 </div> </div>				<div> <div></div> <div> 2016-2017 Grade 12 Term 2 07676 Advisement P 2.5 01880 CE- ENG 122 English Comp A 5.0000 5 05783 Choir/Honors S2 A 5.0000 5 03592 CU Succeed/Ext Stud ETST 2155 A 5.0000 5 02567 Holocaust and Human Behavior A 5.0000 5 04402 Pre-Calculus S2 A 5.0000 5 09201 Student Assistant S2 A 0.0000 2.5 Credit: 30.000 GPA: 4.720 UW GPA: 4.000 </div> </div>			
<div> <div></div> <div> GPA Summary Cumulative GPA (Weighted) 3.526 Class Rank 68 of 377 Percentile 81.96% Cumulative GPA (Unweighted) 3.411 Class Rank 57 of 377 Percentile 84.88% </div> </div>				<div> <div></div> <div> 2014-2015 Grade 10 Term 2 01405 American Lit & Comp S2 A 5.0000 5 06090 Beginning Dance S2 B 5.0000 5 03590 Chemistry S2 A- 5.0000 5 04331 Geometry S2 B+ 5.0000 5 04762 Spanish 1 S2 A 5.0000 5 06254 Team/Life Activities 1 S2 A- 5.0000 5 02505 US History S2 A 5.0000 5 Credit: 36.000 GPA: 3.887 UW GPA: 3.887 </div> </div>				<div> <div></div> <div> Standard Tests 2008 CSAP Math GR 03 Score: 150 Date: 03/10/2008 Result: U 2008 CSAP Reading GR 03 Score: 432 Date: 02/18/2008 Result: U 2008 CSAP Writing GR 03 Score: 150 Date: 03/10/2008 Result: U 2009 CSAP Math GR 04 Score: 186 Date: 03/09/2009 Result: U 2009 CSAP Reading GR 04 Score: 428 Date: 03/09/2009 Result: U 2009 CSAP Writing GR 04 Score: 382 Date: 03/09/2009 Result: U 2010 CSAP Math GR 05 Score: 410 Date: 03/08/2010 Result: U 2010 CSAP Reading GR 05 Score: 548 Date: 03/08/2010 Result: PP 2010 CSAP Science GR 05 Score: 406 Date: 03/08/2010 Result: U 2010 CSAP Writing GR 05 Score: 0 Date: 03/08/2010 Result: NS 2011 CSAP Math GR 06 Score: 318 Date: 03/14/2011 Result: U 2011 CSAP Reading GR 06 Score: 548 Date: 03/14/2011 Result: PP 2011 CSAP Writing GR 06 Score: 485 Date: 03/14/2011 Result: PP 2012 CSAP Math GR 07 Score: 452 Date: 03/12/2012 Result: U 2012 CSAP Reading GR 07 Score: 596 Date: 03/12/2012 Result: PP 2012 CSAP Writing GR 07 Score: 492 Date: 03/12/2012 Result: PP 2013 CSAP Math GR 08 Score: 521 Date: 03/11/2013 Result: PP </div> </div>			
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* Courses with max GPA value > 4.0

Official's Signature _____

Student Information			Course			Course																				
			Mark	Weight	Credit	Mark	Weight	Credit																		
Diploma Type: General Course of Study Diploma Date: 06/02/2017			2014-2015 Grade 10 Term 1 *04250 Algebra Advanced 2 Honors S1 A- 5.0000 5 *01420 American Lit & Comp Honors S1 B 5.0000 5 *02758 AP World History S1 B 5.0000 5 *01925 CE-Mathematics Other A 5.0000 5 *03600 Chemistry Honors S1 B 5.0000 5 04655 French 2 S1 A 5.0000 5 06250 Team/Life Activities 1 S1 A 5.0000 5 Credit: 36.000 GPA: 4.228 UW GPA: 3.624			2016-2017 Grade 12 Term 2 07676 Advisement P 2.5 *04392 AP Calculus AB S2 C 5.0000 5 *03619 AP Physics 1 S2 B 5.0000 5 *01880 CE-ENG 122 English Comp B- 5.0000 5 *02486 Civics Honors A 5.0000 5 09201 Student Assistant S2 A 0.0000 2.5 *07786 Student Leadership S2 A 5.0000 5 06254 Team/Life Activities 1 S2 A 5.0000 5 Credit: 36.000 GPA: 4.082 UW GPA: 3.278																				
GPA Summary Cumulative GPA (Weighted) 4.296 Class Rank 17 of 377 Percentile 95.49% Cumulative GPA (Unweighted) 3.598 Class Rank 27 of 377 Percentile 92.84%			2014-2015 Grade 10 Term 2 *04255 Algebra Advanced 2 Honors S2 A 5.0000 5 *01425 American Lit & Comp Honors S2 A- 5.0000 5 *02759 AP World History S2 B 5.0000 5 *01925 CE-Mathematics Other A 5.0000 5 *03605 Chemistry Honors S2 A 5.0000 5 04657 French 2 S2 A 5.0000 5 06254 Team/Life Activities 1 S2 A 5.0000 5 Credit: 36.000 GPA: 4.810 UW GPA: 3.810			#917 8th Grade Academy Course Mark Weight Credit 2013-2014 Grade 09 Term 1 50404 9th Grade Academy P 2.5 Credit: 2.500 GPA: 0.0000 UW GPA: 0.0000																				
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Start/End Date	Grade	School																								
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2013-2014 Grade 09 Term 2 *02630 AP Human Geography S2 B- 5.0000 5 *03557 Biology Honors S2 B 5.0000 5 04466 CE- Math 060 A 5.0000 5 04652 French 1 S2 A 5.0000 5 *04336 Geometry Honors S2 A 5.0000 5 01357 Intro to Lit & Comp S2 A 5.0000 5 05830 Music Sight and Sound S2 A 5.0000 5 Credit: 36.000 GPA: 4.081 UW GPA: 3.887																										

* Courses with max GPA value > 4.0

Official's Signature _____

Appendix H: Focus Group Interview

Academic Resilience

1. What does it mean (or look like) to be successful in the United States?
2. What does it mean (or look like) to be successful in school in the United States?
3. Describe how Newcomers show they are successful at DHS.

Family

1. Describe how your family has helped you succeed academically.
2. Describe some of your family struggles that have made it hard for you to succeed academically.

School

1. Describe things about the school or teachers that helped you succeed at DHS.
2. Describe things about the school or teachers that made it hard for you to succeed at SHS.

Newcomer Program

1. Describe the Newcomer Center.
2. How did the Newcomer Center help you become successful in school?
3. What challenges did you face in the Newcomer Center?

Community

1. Describe how your neighborhood has helped you succeed academically.
2. Describe what has been challenging in your neighborhood.

Society

1. Describe how the U.S. society has helped you succeed academically.
2. Describe what has been challenging in U.S.society.

Other

1. What are other factors that have helped you to succeed or made it difficult for you to succeed?

The main research question guiding this study is: What factors support or constrain the academic resilience of Newcomers?

The sub questions are:

- How does the family context support or constrain academic success?
- How does the school context support or constrain academic success?
- How does the community context support or constrain academic success?
- How does the societal context support or constrain academic success?

Appendix I: Case study Participant Semi-Structured Interview Protocol

General Demographics- from the focus group questionnaire

1st Interview

Individual

1. What motivates you to be successful in school?
2. Describe an event or experience that has motivated you to do well in school.
3. Describe an event or experience that has been a challenge, but motivated you to do well in school.
4. Where do you see yourself in five years?

Family

1. Describe your family. (Who do you live with? Who stayed behind in your home country?)
2. How has your life changed since you moved to the United States?
3. Why did your family decide to come to the U.S?
 - a. Describe your journey to the U.S.
4. What are your responsibilities at home?
 - a. How do you help your parents/ guardians?
 - b. How do those responsibilities affect your school work?
5. Describe how parents/ guardians/ family help you succeed.
6. What have your parents told you, you need to do in order to be successful?

2nd Interview

School Life

1. How different is the educational system in your country from the educational system in this country?
2. What would you tell your friends in your native country about your experience at school?
3. Describe the best class/teacher that you had.
4. Describe the worst class/teacher that you had.
5. Describe positive and negative relationships with adults in the school.
6. Describe what aspect of DHS has helped you become successful.
7. Describe what aspect of DHS has made you struggle.
 - a. How did you overcome the struggle?
8. Describe a time that you have connected to the teacher.
 - a. Describe a time that you have not connected to the teacher.
9. Describe the most memorable thing you learned.
 - a. Describe what was the most challenging.
10. Are there adults at DHS that helped, motivated, or convinced you to stay in and succeed in school?

3rd Interview

Community

1. Describe the place you used to live in your native country.
 - a. Describe a typical day
2. What was your life like as a refugee?
3. What was your first impression of the United States when you arrived?
4. What is the biggest challenge you have faced in the United States?
5. Describe where you live.
 - a. What do you like and dislike about your community?
6. Do you think you fit into the American society?
 - a. At school?
7. Describe where do you fit in the most home/ school/ friends? Why?

Society

1. Did you take the state assessment test?
 - a. Explain whether you think Newcomers should take those tests?
2. Describe how would you feel if there were no Newcomer Center or ELA classes?
 - a. Would you be able to adjust to the American School culture and society?